The Secret Relationship Between Blacks & Jews

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The Nation of Islam

How Jews Gained Control of the Black American Economy

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How Jews Gained
Black America

The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews, Volume Two

How Jews Gained Control of the Black American Economy

2010 Second Edition

This report was prepared by:

The Historical Research Department

The Nation of Islam

A L L P R A I S E I S D U E T O A L L A H

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The ink of the scholar is more precious than the blood of the martyr.

—

Prophet
Muhammad
(PBUH)

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A Note on Sources, Footnotes, and Notation

The information contained in this volume has been compiled *primarily* from Jewish sources. Every effort has been made to present evidence from the most respected of the Jewish authorities whose works appear in established historical journals or are published by authoritative Jewish publishing houses. A substantial body of evidence that supports the findings herein was excluded by the editors and deemed to be from sources that may be considered anti-Semitic or anti-Jewish. Every effort has been made to be fair and balanced in the presentation of this body of data.

The terms *buy*, *own,* and *sell*, and variations thereof, in connection with the commerce in enslaved Black people, are used with reservation and strictly for the convenience of the reader. In no way should the reader infer sanction of this activity —which is a wholly illegal and immoral crime against humanity—by the use of the terminology of legitimate commercial transactions. Also, the term *slave* refers to the African men, women and children who were forcibly entrapped in dehumanizing conditions for the profit of others. We do not accept such a term as descriptive of their character or nature, only of their circumstance.

And finally, the subject at hand should be approached with great sensitivity. Those who would use this material as a basis for the violation of the human rights of another are abusing the knowledge herein. The wise will view this information as an opportunity to develop a more equitable relationship between the families of God.

Footnote Abbreviations

The following abbreviations will be substituted for often-cited reference material.

AJA— American Jewish Archives

PAJHS, AJHQ, AJH— all denote the *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* (PAJHS), whose name was changed to the *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* (AJHQ), and ultimately to *American Jewish History* (AJH)

EJ— Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972)

ISJL (reporting on various towns and cities)— ISJL Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities, Goldring–Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, 2006, http://www.isjl.org/history/archive/

JAH— Journal of American History

JNH— Journal of Negro History

JSoHis— Journal of Southern History

JEncy— Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901–1910)

NYT— New York Times

AC— Atlanta Constitution

SJH— Southern Jewish History

UJE— Universal Jewish Encyclopedia (New York, 1939–1948)

Preface

We have no documentable evidence of anti-Semitism on the part of the Temples of Islam movement or Elijah Muhammad.

—

Arnold Forster, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith

In 1991 the **Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan**, National Representative of The **Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad** and the **Nation of Islam** (NOI), released the first of several volumes in the scholarly series titled *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*. This research was prepared by the NOI's Historical Research Department in response to the increasingly vicious calumnies made against Minister Farrakhan, namely, that he was "anti-Semitic" and that by his strong advocacy of Black economic and political power he had somehow wounded the "special relationship" that Jews claimed *had always existed* between Blacks and Jews.

In its 334 pages *The Secret Relationship Between*

Blacks and Jews, Volume One, conclusively proved the veracity of The Minister's position, revealing that Jews were in fact at the very center of the trans-Atlantic slave trade as merchants, financiers, shippers, and insurers and among the leading international marketers of the products of African slave labor. This information was compiled from texts written by prominent Jewish scholars and historians such as Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, Dr. Marc Lee Raphael, Dr. Bertram W. Korn, Dr. Abraham Karp, Dr. Herbert I. Bloom, Isaac S. Emmanuel, and Leo Turitz—*all of whom were also rabbis*. Today *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews, Volume One,* can be found in the collections of every major academic library, including those of every Ivy League college and university. Since its publication in 1991, the critics of the Nation of Islam have quietly abandoned the persistent but mythological claim that Jews were either co-sufferers or innocent bystanders in the Black Holocaust.

But there was yet more. In the course of researching the *actual* relationship between Blacks and Jews in America, the Nation of Islam discovered a troubling pattern of Jewish misconduct. It turns out that the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan is only the *most recent* Black leader to be slandered by the Jewish charge of "anti-Semitism." In fact, from early in the last century until the present day, every major Black leader at some point in his or her public life has been tagged with the Jewish scarlet letter "A" for "anti-Semite."

The list of respected Blacks who have been victimized by the "black anti-Semite" label spans the religious and political spectra, from organizations to individuals, from politicians to entertainers. The roster of "black anti-Semites" includes such eminent figures as Booker T.

Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus M. Garvey, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, as well as President Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa. Other Black figures targeted by Jewish slanderers include Julian Bond, Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael), Andrew Young, Kweisi Mfume, and the Reverends Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, and Joseph Lowery. Whole organizations have been so branded, including the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Black Panthers, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (Garvey's movement), and the Nation of Islam. The spiritual leader of the independence movement in India, and the model for the American civil rights movement, Mohandas K. Gandhi, was labeled an "anti-Semite" for his advocacy of Palestinian rights.

Learned Black scholars like John Hope Franklin, J.A. Rogers, James Baldwin, Richard Wright, and even Julius Lester, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker have all been castigated as "black anti-Semites." Black entertainers like the late Michael Jackson, film director Spike Lee, rapper Ice Cube, Arsenio Hall, Muhammad Ali, Public Enemy, and even Oprah Winfrey, if we are to believe some Jewish spokespeople, are *all* "black anti-Semites." As was every one of the 2.2 million Black men attending the 1995 Million Man March, as well as those attending the 2000 Million Family March—babies and all!

Even white presidents Harry S. Truman, John F. Kennedy, Richard M. Nixon, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, and George H.W. Bush have faced the charge of "anti-Semitism" for their statements or policies some Jews found objectionable. Within days of his 2009 inauguration, the first Black president of the

United States of America, Barack Hussein Obama, was declared an "Anti-Semitic Jew-Hater" and caricatured on Israeli posters wearing the traditional Arab keffiyeh (headdress). A campaign initiated in 2010 to impeach President Obama collected petition signatures at suburban Jewish supermarkets, using the same defamatory images. A Google search of "Obama and anti-Semitism" returns over five million hits (a search of "Farrakhan and anti-Semitism" returns a tiny fraction of that number—about 55,000).

Without a doubt the most powerful Black man in American history is the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the Nation of Islam. In all of his more than forty years among Black people in America, The Messenger of Allah never "targeted" Jews in his uncompromising condemnation of white racism, yet Jews at the highest organizational levels have *always* labeled the NOI "anti-Semitic." Cases in point:

- 1942: A secret **Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith** file titled "Temple of Islam Infiltration" states that a "Negro employed by us" proved "quite instrumental" in an FBI raid on the Chicago mosque resulting in 82 arrests.[1]
- 1959: A ***Time Magazine*** article accuses the NOI of "anti-Semitism."[2]
- 1959: The **American Jewish Committee** sent Black spies from the **Urban League** to Mr. Muhammad's Newark, New Jersey, appearance.[3]
- 1963: The ***Jewish Chronicle*** of

> Pittsburgh labeled the NOI "the anti-Semitic Negro extremist group known as the 'Black Muslims.'"[4]

In response to the 1959 *Time Magazine* article, the head of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, **Arnold Forster**, admitted in a secret memo that "*Time* magazine notwithstanding, *we have no documentable evidence of anti-Semitism on the part of the Temples of Islam movement or Elijah Muhammad*." He affirmed that they are "not anti-Jewish per se." Yet Jewish organizations publicly continued to label the NOI as "anti-Semitic." In 1960, the chairman of the **American Jewish Congress**, Nathan Edelstein, wrote that "We doubt whether the bulk of its followers are presently committed to anti-Semitism."[5] A Jewish scholar who studied this racist Jewish phenomenon offered a compelling explanation:

> Despite the Nation of Islam's political marginalization, American Jewish Committee officials still feared Muhammad. His charismatic personality, willingness to confront racism in the most dramatic rhetorical terms and ability to inspire even non-believing African American listeners concerned Jewish leaders. The Nation of Islam leader, they feared, could earn the respect of his black audiences, even if they chose not to join his movement.[6]

Amazingly, this passage does not claim that Mr. Muhammad or the NOI evidenced any form of "anti-Semitism"—it says that the Jewish leaders "feared" Elijah Muhammad's "willingness to confront racism"! What's more, Jewish

organizations worked tirelessly against the NOI—an organization *they knew was not anti-Jewish*. The question is, WHY? Why do these responsible Jewish leaders and organizations *have* to make the Black men, women, and children who stood with Muhammad "anti-Semitic"? Why did these Jewish leaders, presumably dedicated to the protection and advancement of the Jewish people, feel compelled to deem the NOI their enemy, as opposed to real and known anti-Semites like the whites of the neo-Nazi movement? What undiscovered historical circumstances created this odious Jewish *policy* that affixes the term "anti-Semite" to the strongest of Black advocates for justice, whether they mention Jews or not?

It has reached the point today that *any* Black person rising to national prominence must first declare publicly his or her galactic distance from Black leaders branded with the Jewish scarlet letter —before any other issue can be addressed. The latest example of this unfortunate state of affairs was the 2008 presidential election campaign, in which the ultimate winner, Barack Obama, was forced to denounce Minister Farrakhan and renounce and abandon *his own pastor* of twenty years, the Reverend Jeremiah E. Wright. In this extraordinary exercise of raw Jewish political intimidation, a fabricated threat of "black anti-Semitism" was elevated in importance above two wars, a crashing economy, the health care crisis, home foreclosures, education reform, drug violence, rising unemployment, and many other *serious* concerns, in order to upbraid the *Black* man for ever thinking about a relationship with those *Black* leaders unacceptable to the Jewish people.

Ultimately, Blacks can only redefine and restructure their relationship with Jews based on

accurate analysis of the historical events that shaped Black–Jewish interactions. The Messenger of Allah, The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, taught that "History is best qualified to reward your research," for only through that re-education process will Blacks be empowered to establish informed and effective policies for Black advancement that are no longer subject to manipulation and control by *any* other people.

The first volume of this title presented a comprehensive overview of the slave-trading history of the Jewish people. This volume continues that examination and presents new evidence that calls into question the prevailing interpretations of the history of Blacks and Jews in the post-slavery American South. The research finds Blacks and Jews to be critical members of the culture, playing vastly different roles within the cotton economy. This volume will review those roles and examine the nature of the Black–Jewish relationship. Everyone knows that Blacks after slavery never did get the promised forty acres or the mules—but there are now surprising answers about who actually did.

Was Jim Crow law an equal opportunity oppressor, or did Blacks and Jews have different experiences in the American South? The American Labor Movement has been deliberately overlooked in most histories of Black people, despite its devastating long-term effect on Black progress. That movement is examined for its special relevance to the history of Blacks and Jews. Finally, the Ku Klux Klan reigned for decades throughout America as the terroristic enforcers of white supremacy: lynchings, massacres, and ritual murders were common occurrences. We know which end of the rope Blacks occupied, but what role did Jews play in this blood-soaked chapter in American history?

Those who have vigilantly controlled the "dialogue" between Blacks and Jews have removed all these critical historical issues from consideration. Now those who have incessantly and wrongly labeled Blacks "anti-Semitic" must confront a more complete body of evidence that challenges long-held beliefs about the Black–Jewish relationship.

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1 Cheryl Greenberg, "Black and Jewish Responses to Japanese Internment," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14, no. 2 (winter 1995): 22, 24, 35 n. 33 and 35.

2 Marc Dollinger, "'Until You Can Fight as Generals': American Jews and Black Nationalism, 1958-64," in *The Jewish Role in American Life,* vol. 4, eds. Barry Glassner and Jeremy Schoenberg (Los Angeles: USC Casden Institute, 2005), 52ff.

3 Ibid., 54-56.

4 19 July 1963, 20.

5 Dollinger, "'Until You Can Fight as Generals,'" 52-53.

6 Ibid., 54.

Prologue

"Cyrus" & the Mordecais: The Essence of the Relationship Between Blacks and Jews

One day in 1865, at their plantation in Richmond, Virginia, members of the most distinguished Jewish family in America were stunned to learn that the Africans they held against their will were openly rejecting their enslavement.[7] The family's matriarch, Rose Mordecai, complained that her African slave was becoming "increasingly impudent" and resentful of being overworked. Mrs. Mordecai enlisted the services of a Black overseer to coerce her slave's obedience, but his efforts were futile. The Mordecais then appealed to the woman's husband, "Cyrus," but to their astonishment "Cyrus" proved to be in complete and total agreement with his wife and refused to intervene. "Cyrus," it turns out, had also had enough of this injustice and joined forces with his Black woman, waging a full-scale rebellion. Sister-in-law Emma Mordecai described the scene:

> Cyrus refuses either to leave the place or to do anything on it, unless sure of high wages and an increased allowance of meat.…He feels as if the whole place belongs to him.

When confronted, "Cyrus" declared that "There was to be no more master and mistress now, *all was*

equal." Now fully exasperated, the Mordecais demanded to know if their now ex-slave would have the *chutzpah* to continue to live at the Mordecais' without working *for them*. Said the Black man:

> Yes, until I see how things are going to work. All the land belongs to the Yankees now and they are going to divide it among the coloured people.[8]

The Black man told the Jews that he had a right to stay, to bring in whom he pleased, and to keep his family on the land. He was entitled to a part of the plantation, he declared, because its success depended on his labor. Furthermore, in his opinion, *the kitchen belonged to him because he cut the timber to build it!* Emma protested that "her slaves" were "All doing as they please and no one asserting any authority over them."

"Cyrus" and his Jewish oppressors were surely unaware of it, but contained in this episode is a profound truth about the relationship between Blacks and Jews. Indeed, the conflict on the Mordecais' plantation leads Blacks and Jews to some fateful questions: Was "Cyrus" a noble freedom fighter asserting his God-given right to be free, or was he a raging "anti-Semite" disrespecting the "divine rights" of God's Chosen People? Were the Mordecais engaging in a lawful and righteous societal practice, or were they unscrupulously exploiting the labor of an African family for their own profit?

Jews and Blacks may hold entirely different answers to these questions. For most Blacks, "Cyrus" is absolutely and unquestionably justified as he throws off the chains of enslavement and

demands reparations for his family's long, undeserved suffering. He is as justified to leave his enslavement as the Jews (of Biblical prophecy) were to leave Pharaoh's Egypt and the concentration camps of the Nazi regime. On the other hand, Jews might claim that American slavery was in fact the "law of the land," that their plantations and slaves were *legally* obtained, and that they were coincidental participants in a long-established slave-based economic system. And thus they had a right to the lifelong labor of "Cyrus" and his family.[9]

Despite "Cyrus" and his wife's clear declaration of their own life's direction, the Mordecais felt personally betrayed that "their" Black slaves had chosen freedom over permanent unpaid service to their family. "If they felt as I do," Rose Mordecai tearfully exclaimed, "they could not possibly leave me." Another wondered how "her slaves" could "feel so little remorse at abandoning [us]." And therein lies a troubling reality: the joyously celebrated emancipation of the Black slaves was, at the very same time, seen—by a people presumed to be the Chosen of God—as an aggressive act of betrayal.

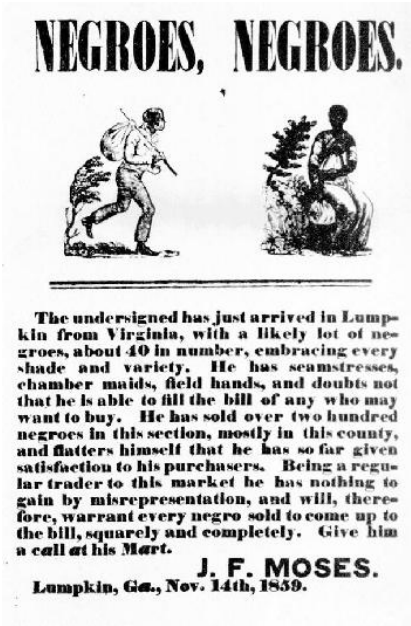
Historically, Blacks and Jews continued down these distinctly separate tracks in almost every arena where they encountered each other. The *secret* of their relationship—and its moral, legal, social, political, and economic nuances—is unlocked by that poignant and contentious encounter in that Richmond, Virginia, kitchen. Does that kosher kitchen belong to "Cyrus" and his family, or Rose Mordecai and hers? Each felt entitled and both felt they had the moral authority—each unmoved by the other's position. And now, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, Blacks and Jews find themselves at a similar historic crossroad.

7 The episode is recounted in Jennifer Ann Stollman, "'Building Up a House of Israel in a Land of Christ': Jewish Women in the Antebellum and Civil War South" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State Univ., 2001), 325-29; Harry Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War* (New York: Arco, 1963), 298-309.

8 Stollman, "'Building Up a House of Israel,'" 327.

9 Emily Bingham, "American, Jewish, Southern, Mordecai: Constructing Identities To 1865," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History,* eds. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 47.

Introduction



NEGROES, NEGROES.

The undersigned has just arrived in Lumpkin from Virginia, with a likely lot of negroes, about 40 in number, embracing every shade and variety. He has seamstresses, chamber maids, field hands, and doubts not that he is able to fill the bill of any who may want to buy. He has sold over two hundred negroes in this section, mostly in this county, and flatters himself that he has so far given satisfaction to his purchasers. Being a regular trader to this market he has nothing to gain by misrepresentation, and will, therefore, warrant every negro sold to come up to the bill, squarely and completely. Give him a call at his Mart.

J. F. MOSES.

Lumpkin, Ga., Nov. 14th, 1859.

Jews in the Black Holocaust

All truth passes
through three stages.
First, it is ridiculed.
Second, it is
violently opposed.
Third, it is accepted
as being self-evident.

—
attributed
to
Arthur
Schopenhauer

At the end of the American Civil War in 1865, whites worried about the continued growth and prosperity of America after their *only* source of revenue had been "freed." Emancipation of the Black slave was not the goal of the war, but an unintended and unprepared-for consequence. Slavery was the only economic model that had ever worked in the European colonial experience, and giving up its benefits for an untried slaveless society was beyond the comprehension of American political leaders. In order for America to survive, they firmly believed, the slave system—the very foundation of the American economy—would have to be revived. *African slaves* would have to continue to work the vast plantations of cotton, sugar, tobacco, rice, and corn; *African slaves* would have to continue to mine the iron ore and coal; *African slaves* would have to continue to construct and maintain the nation's burgeoning infrastructure—

the bridges, roads, railroads, canals and all the development that accompanied western expansion.[10]

In fact, Blacks were the only population that had the knowledge, the experience, the skills, and the demonstrated industry to perform these critical tasks, but after 310 years of unpaid and unappreciated toil they had their own ideas about what to do with their invaluable labor. Despite Black people's vision of their future as free American citizens, white elites enacted specific policies in every sector of society that in effect would rebuild the slave system and return the African to servitude.

On a massive scale they attempted to dispossess Blacks of the notion that they had *any* rights in America, save the right to work for white people. A series of private- and public-sector policies, which came to be popularly known as Jim Crow laws, were enacted to achieve these ends, and every white man, woman, and child was expected to play a supervisory role.[11]

Under this newly formed racial caste system Blacks—*despite having been declared free*—were to be kept far away from the voting booth,[12] and all efforts at Black education that did not serve the ends of white supremacy were to be violently repelled. A financial system was created that excluded Black economic independence; a system of labor was established which ensured that Blacks could find no employment options other than as plantation laborers, domestics, or bearers of heavy loads; and Blacks were denied *any* legal rights within the judicial system. Accompanying these specific policy objectives was the psychological necessity that Blacks be inculcated in the unshakable belief that they were utterly inferior to

any white person; and all thoughts of equality or justice they dared to entertain had to be extinguished permanently and irrevocably.[13]

In fact, all of these policies were *successfully* institutionalized in America, and many still exist in some form throughout American society. All the racial ills of today—the alarming disparities in the condition of white and Black Americans—can be traced to these post-slavery imperatives.

The relationship between Blacks and Jews is a subset of this larger American race-relations tragedy. Jews are whites in a system that has conferred all of its benefits, privileges, and advantages on a purely racial basis, and Jews have attained a higher level of prosperity than that achieved by any other white ethnic group.[14] But in order for them to have achieved so high a level of success in America, they had to have participated *actively* in a system that, at all costs, ensures one fundamental American principle—unchallengeable white supremacy.

With the publication of the first volume of *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews* in 1991 came the revelation that before the time of Christopher Columbus and through the European expansion into the western hemisphere, Jews were active participants in the epic racial crimes committed by the "New World's" European invaders. An abundance of Jewish scholarly writings provided extensive evidence directly contradicting the popular notion that Jews had ever been the friends or allies of the suffering and oppressed Black man and woman.

Further, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews, Volume One,* showed definitively that Jews were thriving mightily in America long, long before the Statue of Liberty was a thought in the

mind of its French sculptor. In fact, ocean-bound Jewish merchants had mastered commercial trade throughout the western hemisphere almost three centuries before the birth of the United States, ferrying African slaves and the commodities they produced throughout the European colonial settlements in the earliest days of the "New World." As world-renowned merchants and traders, they were among the framers of the system of capitalism[15] and had helped pioneer the African slave trade, profiteering enormously from that horrific crime against humanity.

And this cruel and exploitative relationship remained essentially unchanged after the American Civil War and the supposed emancipation of the Black man and woman. To appreciate the Jewish attitude and behavior toward America's Black citizens in the post-slavery era, it is important at the outset to review the substance of the Black–Jewish relationship leading up to that time, from Europe's "discovery" of America to the Civil War. In 1992, Dr. Abraham Peck, of the American Jewish Archives, was unmistakably clear about the history:

> The first two centuries of the Black–Jewish encounter in America were highlighted by a fairly extensive record of Jewish slave-holding. Indeed, during the colonial period, in the small Jewish community of the time, almost every Jewish household of any form, North or South, possessed at least one slave.[16]

The historical record[17] supports every word of that assessment:

- Christopher Columbus—whose trans-Atlantic expeditions initiated

the genocide of the Red man and forecasted the African Holocaust—was financed by Spanish Jews and is claimed to be a Jew himself.

- Jewish merchants owned, insured, and financed slave ships and outfitted them with chains and shackles. Jews were auctioneers, brokers, and wholesalers, keeping the slave economy oiled with money, markets, and supplies.

- Nine out of ten Africans were shipped to Brazil. Jewish scholar Dr. Arnold Wiznitzer described the early Jewish presence there: "Besides their important position in the sugar industry and in tax farming, *they dominated the slave trade*....The buyers who appeared at the auctions were almost always Jews, and because of this lack of competitors they could buy slaves at low prices."

- According to Wiesenthal Center scholar Dr. Harold Brackman, during the 1600s "slave trading in Brazil became *a 'Jewish' mercantile specialty* in much the same way it had been in early medieval Europe." In fact, wrote Jewish scholar Jonathan Schorsch, "Jewish merchants routinely possessed *enormous numbers of slaves* temporarily before selling them off." The *Jewish Encyclopedia* adds that "Jewish commercial activity" in this

time included a “monopoly of the slave trade.”

- The synagogue in Brazil imposed a tax on its members’ slaves. Slave auctions were postponed if they fell on a Jewish holiday.

- The Jews of Surinam owned plantations with Hebrew names like *Machanayim*, *Nachamu*, and *Goshen*, where, according to Dr. Marcus Arkin, they used “many thousands” of Black slaves. Rabbi Herbert I. Bloom added that the “slave trade was one of the most important Jewish activities...” In 1694, Jews owned 9,000 Africans, and by 1791 there were 100 “Jewish mulattoes” in Surinam—the deliberate result of the rape of African women by their Jewish enslavers.

- Jewish historian Dr. Cecil Roth wrote that the slave revolts in parts of South America “were largely directed against [Jews], as being *the greatest slave-holders of the region*.” Jews set up militias with the sole purpose of fighting the Black Maroons, the escaped Africans who were fighting to free their enslaved brethren. The Jewish militias murdered the Maroons and cut off their hands to award as trophies.

- The first Hebrew poem written in the “New World” was a bitter attack on the Black Maroon leader.

- The Jews of Barbados, wrote one Jewish scholar, “made a good deal of their money by purchasing and hiring out negroes…” All Barbadian Jews—including the rabbi—owned Black slaves.

- Jews warehoused so many African slaves in Barbados that Gentile authorities moved to limit the number of captives they could possess.

- Jews became the major traders in “refuse slaves”—Africans who were weak and sick from the Middle Passage voyage. Jewish traders “fattened them up” and sold them at a profit.

- A Jewish shipper had a monopoly on trade to the notorious slave dungeon at Gorée Island—the Auschwitz of the Black Holocaust.

- Jewish scholars Isaac and Susan Emmanuel reported that in Curacao, which was a major slave-trading depot, “the shipping business was mainly a Jewish enterprise.” Rabbi Marc Lee Raphael wrote that in Curacao in the seventeenth century, as well as in Barbados and Jamaica in the eighteenth century, “Jewish merchants played a major role in the slave trade.”

- Sugar fueled and expanded the slave trade, and according to Jewish scholars, Jews “acquired large

sugarcane plantations and became the leading entrepreneurs in the sugar trade."

- The first Jewish settlement in the United States was a Florida sugar plantation supported entirely by the labor of enslaved Africans.

- When early New Yorkers sought to purchase slaves, they contacted "the jobbers and the Jews," who were the recognized international dealers. The largest shipments of Africans arriving in New York in the first half of the 1700s were commissioned by Jewish merchants.

- European encroachment created lethal conflict with the Indigenous communities, and Jewish traders often supplied the Europeans with weapons and critical provisions. Once the Red man was removed, it was often the Jewish traders who acquired the valuable land. One actually held title to the entire Grand Canyon.

- Jews smuggled slaves to places where slavery was illegal, rented them when they did not want to buy, and bred African women for sexual purposes. Jews ran jails and imprisoned and punished Black slaves; they served as constables, sheriffs, detectives, and bounty hunters in the slavocracy and participated in the dehumanization

of Black Africans.

- Itinerant Jewish peddlers were known to search for and capture runaway slaves and bring them in for the bounty. Jews advertised openly for the return of their "runaways."

- The founders of Richmond's Jewish community were *all* slaveholders.

- When slavery was outlawed in the colony of Georgia, Jews left; they returned once slavery was reinstated.

- In Newport, Rhode Island—the center of the rum and slave trade—every Jewish family owned Black slaves. Even their synagogue was built by slaves "of some skill." All 22 Newport distilleries serving the triangular slave trade were owned by Jews.

- The leading abolitionist organization bitterly complained that Jews "have never taken any steps whatever" against slavery.

- American *rabbis* owned and rented slaves. The nation's highest paid clergyman, Rabbi Morris Raphall of New York, defended slavery and claimed God Himself had sanctioned it. The one rabbi who forcefully attacked slavery, Baltimore's David Einhorn, was thrown out of his own Jewish congregation and forced to

flee the city.

- The Jewish writer Mordecai Manuel Noah was such a virulent racist that the very first Black newspaper, the *Freedom's Journal*, was started in 1827 just to combat his racist attacks.

- Slave smugglers and pirates like the Jewish Lafitte brothers continued the international slave trade for years after its legal end in 1807.

- More than 3,000 Jewish soldiers fought *for* the slaveholders in the Civil War, and a Jewish owner of a 140-slave plantation, Judah P. Benjamin, was secretary of state for the Confederacy. His picture is engraved on Confederate currency.

- Jews were known to "free" their Black chattel but only after they became elderly and were unable to work, forcing them to fend for themselves in their old age.

- Jews bequeathed Black human beings from one generation to another, and they sold Black children and babies away from their parents.

- Jews suppressed slave uprisings and in 1831, Jews were involved in hunting down the great Nat Turner and his freedom fighters.

- The first Jew elected to the U.S.

Senate, Florida's David Yulee, was one of the most strident haters of Indians and defenders of slavery.

- Dr. Brackman wrote, "Jews were about twice as likely to be slave owners as the average white Southerner."[18] Rabbi and historian Dr. Bertram W. Korn, the acknowledged expert on 19th-century American Jewry, wrote: "It would seem to be realistic to conclude that any Jew who could afford to own slaves and had need for their services would do so....Jews participated in every aspect and process of the exploitation of the defenseless blacks."

And though some of these open acts of racial persecution might be attributed to individual Jews acting on their own, nearly all the offenders were members of larger Jewish communities and enjoyed a prominent and honored place among their coreligionists. The profits from these slavery-based enterprises helped finance Jewish community development, built synagogues, homes, schools, businesses, and institutions, and in many untold ways enriched their lives, congregations, and communities.

The distressing reality is that one can enumerate, without much difficulty, the extensive involvement of Jews in the Black Holocaust—even if one is limited to only that evidence published by Jewish sources. Actually, one is hard-pressed to name a single prominent American Jew in the slavery era who *did not* own slaves or profit from

Black African slavery.

In his 1983 book *Jews and Judaism in the United States*, Rabbi Dr. Marc Lee Raphael, the longtime editor of the most prestigious of Jewish historical journals, the *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, wrote (p. 14) one of the more definitive statements on Jewish involvement in the Black Holocaust. "In fact," he stated, "in all the American colonies, whether French (Martinique), British, or Dutch, *Jewish merchants frequently dominated* [emphasis ours]." He continues:

> This was no less true on the North American mainland, where during the eighteenth century Jews participated in the "triangular trade" that brought slaves from Africa to the West Indies and there exchanged them for molasses, which in turn was taken to New England and converted into rum for sale in Africa. Isaac Da Costa of Charleston in the 1750's, David Franks of Philadelphia in the 1760's, and Aaron Lopez of Newport in the late 1760's and early 1770's dominated Jewish slave trading on the American continent.

Given the historical record of the early Black–Jewish relationship, the attitudes and behaviors of American Jews in the post-slavery era should not be hard to predict. This volume of *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews* will examine this well-established blueprint as it unfolds after the Emancipation Proclamation and on through the Reconstruction era.

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10 See Frederick Trautmann, ed., *Travels on the Lower Mississippi, 1879-1880: A Memoir by Ernst von Hesse-Wartegg* (Columbia: Univ. of

Missouri Press, 1990), 103.

11 Pete Daniel, "The Metamorphosis of Slavery, 1865-1900," *JAH* 66, no. 1 (Jan. 1979): 88 and passim.

12 Tracy Campbell, *Deliver the Vote: A History of Election Fraud, An American Political Tradition—1742–2004* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005), 58-62. A brief review of post–Civil War efforts to suppress Black voting rights is in Steven F. Lawson, *Black Ballots: Voting Rights in the South, 1944-1969* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1976), 1-22. Mississippi, for instance, cut the percentage of Black men registered to vote from over 90 percent during Reconstruction (1865–1877) to less than 6 percent in 1892, a practice that occurred in most Southern states.

13 Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009); Thomas F. Pettigrew, *Epitaph for Jim Crow* (New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1964), 16-18.

14 Esther I. Wilder and William H. Walters, "Ethnic and Religious Components of the Jewish Income Advantage, 1969 and 1989," *Sociological Inquiry* 68, no. 3 (Aug. 1998), 426: "American Jews have long enjoyed a comparative income advantage, earning considerably more, on average, than other ethnoreligious groups." Also, Rowena Olegario, "'That Mysterious People': Jewish Merchants, Transparency, and Community in Mid-Nineteenth Century America," *Business History Review* 73, no. 2 (summer 1999): 187; Leonard Dinnerstein and David M. Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), 155-59: "[N]o group experienced such startling success as the Jews." Also, Benjamin Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger: A Study of Jewish Life in the Small Community* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), 121, 123. According to Jewish sociologist Nathan Glazer, "the rise in the social and economic position of the Jews has been extremely rapid, far surpassing that which can be shown for any other immigrant group." See Sidney Goldstein, "American Jewry: A Demographic Analysis," in *The Future of the Jewish Community in America*, ed. David Sidorsky (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), 120-21; Lenni Brenner, *Jews in America Today* (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1986), 63-64; Naomi Wiener Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States, 1830-1914* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1984), 30-31; Nathan Glazer, "The American Jew and the Attainment of Middle-Class Rank: Some Trends and Explanations," in *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, ed. Marshall Sklare (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1958); Morris N. Kertzer, *Today's American Jew* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 20-27; Barry R. Chiswick, "The Earnings and Human Capital of American Jews," *Journal of Human Resources* 18, no. 3 (summer 1983): 313-36.

15 See *UJE* (1948), s.v. "capitalism, role of Jews in"; Berthold Altmann, "Jews and the Rise of Capitalism: Economic Theory and Practice in a Westphalian Community," *Jewish Social Studies* 5 (1943).

16 From the brochure for the exhibit *Blacks and Jews: The American Experience, 1654–1992*, presented by Hebrew Union College, Jewish

Institute of Religion, the American Jewish Archives, and the American Jewish Committee (Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Fla., 1992).

17 Sources for the following information can be found in *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* vol. 1 (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 1991).

18 Harold Brackman, "Black–Jewish Relations in the Nineteenth Century," *Encyclopedia of American Jewish History* (2008), 2:418.

Blacks and Jews in the Jim Crow South

After the Civil War

On April 9, 1865, the rebel commander Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House, ending the four-year civil war that had bloodied and battered America. And Black African slavery, the principal feature of America's economy, was left in ruins. Pres. Ulysses S. Grant led the nation as it entered into a period of recovery known as Federal Reconstruction, a time designated for rebuilding the Southern sector and reconnecting it to the national infrastructure, thus making a fractured nation whole again.

Despite the widespread death and destruction the war left in its wake, whites of the North and South quickly repaired their fraternal bonds in the face of what they perceived as a greater threat—the "loosed hordes" of "lawless Black brutes," numbering upwards of four million, who were now demanding the long-overdue benefits of American

citizenship. Even as the Southern leaders of the greatest armed revolt in the history of America found pardons and prompt forgiveness awaiting them, the hardworking and ever-loyal Black man and woman found their post-slavery reception bitterly cold.

The war may have "freed the slaves" but it also heightened America's dependence on Black labor and the multitude of goods it produced. The economy had long been based on cotton production, and the astronomical war debt intensified the need for cotton revenues. Moreover, to most white men the emancipation of the Black man meant their own emasculation; indeed, the very sight of "free" Blacks only magnified the white race hatred focused squarely on the Black African, the scapegoat for a war that cost as many as 700,000 lives. Add to this volatile dynamic the multitude of whites from all across Europe, including millions of Jews, who began in earnest their epic migration to America. Blacks and Jews entered this explosive period poised for confrontation as they each pursued their own agendas for political, social, and economic empowerment.

The South has always been the geographical focal point of America's racial conflict, and it represents the nation's many racial contradictions. It is both the "Bible Belt" and the home of the Ku Klux Klan; it is America's so-called moral heartland and the scene of thousands of grisly public lynchings. Its agriculture is the very source of white America's vast wealth, but the South also harbors devastating Black poverty and despair. It is the region where American patriotism is most fervently expressed—and the region where American freedom has been most vociferously denied. The South is

where Jews found their "Promised Land" and where Black Africans suffered centuries of unrelenting earthly hell. It is also the place where the Black–Jewish relationship was arguably most intense and whose history is most carefully concealed. So it is here, then, in America's racial crucible, that the historical relationship of Blacks and Jews must be meticulously examined and re-evaluated.

The popular assumption is that "God's Chosen People" could not have survived in a place infamous for its ruthless racial repression. Jews, after all, are first and foremost soldiers of righteousness and champions of the oppressed—never agents of the enslaver, the modern-day Pharaoh. This potent religious imagery lurks just beneath the surface of the Black–Jewish relationship in America; consequently, the reality of the vast Jewish presence in the Jim Crow South will be surprising to many. Dr. Louis Schmier is one of a few Jewish scholars who have researched the neglected field of Southern Jewish history. He claims that

> seeking out the story of the Jew in the South would be like a blind man trying to find a black cat in a darkened room when the cat is not in the room in the first place.[19]

But the fact is that there is no shortage of evidence verifying the centrality of the Jewish role in the redevelopment of Southern institutions in that half-century between the end of slavery and the First World War.[20] The reason for this perceived Jewish absence, Schmier continues, is the view that "the South is a violent and savage place in which all minorities fear for their lives."[21] In fact, the historical record clearly shows that there were

indeed *many* Jewish "cats" in the Jim Crow South.

Throughout the South when slavery was its most cherished institution, Jews set up twenty-eight thriving synagogues. Far from being a center of anti-Jewish discrimination, the Southern white culture enabled a Jewish integration so complete that the region became known as "a hotbed of *philo-Semitism*"—for its extraordinary love and acceptance of the Jewish people. Old Jewish family names from the earliest colonial times grace Southern texts and embellish the lore of the region. The Cohens, Minises, and others were fully involved in the economic, philanthropic, social, and political ventures of Georgia. According to Mark I. Greenberg, "They were 'First Families,' the most established and well-respected men and women of the city."[22] And every Southern state similarly boasts of its own colonial Jewish pilgrims in the most glowing terms. The Black Southern experience was decidedly different.

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19 Louis Schmier, ed., *Reflections of Southern Jewry: The Letters of Charles Wessolowsky, 1878-1879* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1982), 168; Eliza R.L. McGraw, *Two Covenants: Representations of Southern Jewishness* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2005), 4; Gary P. Zola, "Why Study Southern Jewish History?" *SJH* 1 (1998): 2. Also, Barry S. Tuchfeld, "The 'Involuntary' Voluntary Organization: Social Control in a Southern Jewish Community," *Contemporary Jewry* 3, no. 1 (1976): 13; Leonard Dinnerstein, review of *Jews of the South*, eds. Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier, *JSoHis* 51, no. 2 (1985): 321.

20 Louis E. Schmier, "Jews," *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture,* eds. Charles Reagan Wilson and William R. Ferris (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1989), 435-36; Mary Dale Palsson, "Jews," *Encyclopedia of Southern History*, eds. David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1979), 648-49. Palsson's encyclopedia entry on the topic of Jews is at least six times longer than the very next entry, "Jim Crow." Also, Robert G. Corley, *Paying "Civic Rent": The Jews of Emanu-El and the Birmingham Community* (Birmingham: A.H. Cather, 1982).

21 Schmier, *Reflections of Southern Jewry*, 173.

22 Mark I. Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity in Nineteenth-Century America: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830-1880" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Florida, 1997), 251-52.

Also Robert N. Rosen, “Jewish Confederates,” in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History,* eds. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 112.

Blacks After Slavery

You say you have emancipated us.... But when you turned us loose, you gave us no acres. You turned us loose to the sky, to the storm, to the whirlwind, and, worst of all, you turned us loose to the wrath of our infuriated masters.

—

Frederick Douglass, 1876

The deceptive terms of Abraham Lincoln's emancipation edict of 1863 offered little in the way of actual freedom, justice, or equality for the Black African. In fact, the Emancipation Proclamation itself *freed not a single slave* and further guaranteed that slavery in some regions would remain intact. Lincoln himself was pessimistic about America's potential for racial harmony. His admonition to a delegation of Black leaders at the White House should have clarified his true intentions:

> The aspiration of men is to enjoy equality with the best when free, but on this broad continent not a single man of your race is made the equal of a single man of

> ours….I cannot alter it if I would….It is better for us both, therefore, to be separated.[23]

Despite Lincoln's separatist directive, most ex-slaves felt they had little choice but to seek a place in the only "home" they knew—a reuniting nation that had never treated them as anything but open enemies. Blacks had been slaves in both the North and the South, and "free blacks" had never enjoyed true equality in *any* American state. Even those white abolitionists who earnestly wanted an end to slavery had no intention of granting the Black man full social, economic, or political citizenship. They decried the horrors of that cruelest of institutions, but most fundamentally believed in the rightness of white mastery over all affairs of the nation.[24] Their slaveholding kinsmen to the South resented the loss of their valuable "negro property" and openly vowed to return the Black man to his rightful place —under white authority. Neither of these white attitudes suited the Black man, who felt entitled to full, unfettered freedom, justice, and equality.

For their part, emancipated Blacks had hoped to chart their own destiny but the odds were stacked mightily against them. Most freed slaves were skilled in agriculture and the building trades, but few had ever engaged in any form of commerce; indeed, many had never even seen money or known of its role in their lives.[25] In 1870, nine of ten Black adults could not read; the tenth had no power to dispute what he could read. Although there were attempts to educate the ex-slave after centuries of legally enforced ignorance, such efforts were meager and often cynical and proved no match for the challenges he faced.[26] The plight of ex-slaves "Toby" and "Govie" illustrates the immense difficulties facing the new *Americans*:

> I don't know as I 'spected nothing from freedom, but they turned us out like a bunch of stray dogs, no homes, no clothing, no nothing, not 'nough food to last us one meal. After we settles on that place, I never seed man or woman, 'cept Govie, for six years, 'cause it was a long ways to anywhere. All we had to farm with was sharp sticks. We'd stick holes and plant corn, and when it come up we'd punch up the dirt round it. We didn't plant cotton, 'cause we couldn't eat that. I made bows and arrows to kill wild game with, and we never went to a store for nothing. We made our clothes out of animal skins.[27]

There would be no forty acres, no mules, no milk, no honey. The vast majority of Blacks had nothing but each other and their faith in God. No sufficient arrangements were made to house, feed, or clothe any of the newly "freed" Blacks. The rude shacks, barns, and hovels they lived in on the plantation as slaves continued to be their only housing afterward.[28] Blacks should have expected the equal division of all America's assets. True reparations meant the equal distribution of not only the land, but America's infrastructure, including the ships, the ports, the markets, the buildings, the schools, the banks, the stores, the factories, and all other property obtained through the staggering profits generated by African slave labor. The estimated value of the Black slaves at the time of their "emancipation" was at least $6 billion.[29] But the Black man and woman soon realized what all white people already knew: that America had fought a civil war—not a revolution. The reunited states of America were fully determined to return to

a racial arrangement that had always worked for them.

Consequently, Blacks faced an elaborate assortment of laws, customs, attitudes, and traditions undisturbed from the slavery era. The objective of these odious edicts was to cripple the Black man economically while brutally redirecting the massive Black workforce back into the cotton fields and into a permanent state of servile dependency and second-class citizenship.[30]

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23 C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1968), 81.

24 Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), 261ff.

25 Lawrence N. Powell, *New Masters: Northern Planters During the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1980; reprint, New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 1998), 90. For examples, see Andrew Waters, ed., *On Jordan's Stormy Banks: Personal Accounts of Slavery in Georgia* (Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 2000), 154, 169.

26 Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, "The Ex-Slave in the Post-Bellum South: A Study of the Economic Impact of Racism in a Market Environment," *Journal of Economic History* 33, no. 1 (March 1973): 136, 145.

27 B. A. Botkin, ed., *Lay My Burden Down: A Folk History of Slavery* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1958), 247; Theodore Saloutos, "Southern Agriculture and the Problems of Readjustment, 1865-1877," *Agricultural History* 30, no. 2 (April 1956): 60.

28 Roger L. Ransom, *Conflict and Compromise: The Political Economy of Slavery, Emancipation, and the American Civil War* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), 50.

29 Andrew Weintraub, "The Economics of Lincoln's Proposal for Compensated Emancipation," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 32, no. 2 (April 1973): 171-77; William N. Parker, "The South in the National Economy, 1865-1970," *Southern Economic Journal* 46, no. 4 (April 1980): 1025 n. 12. Also, Ransom, *Conflict and Compromise*, 227ff. The investment value of the ex-slaves represented at least half the wealth of the entire South. See Lewis N. Wynne, "The Role of Freedmen in the Post Bellum Cotton Economy of Georgia," *Phylon* 42, no. 4 (1981): 317.

30 Jay R. Mandle, "Sharecropping and the Plantation Economy in the United States South," in *Sharecropping and Sharecroppers,* ed. T. J. Byres (London: Frank Cass, 1983), 121; Eric Foner, "Rights and the Constitution in Black Life During the Civil War and Reconstruction," *JAH* 74, no. 3 (Dec. 1987): 871.

Blacks made valiant efforts to escape the clutches of their former slave-masters. At least sixty all-Black towns were founded throughout the South and Midwest, but most became the victim of white encroachment, hostility, and destruction. See Norman L. Crockett, *The Black Towns* (Lawrence, KS: Regents Press of Kansas, 1979). Also Neil R. McMillen, "Jim Crow and the Limits of Freedom, 1890-1940," in *Civil Rights Since 1787*, eds. Jonathan Birnbaum and Clarence Taylor (New York: New York Univ. Press, 2000), 197: "The best strategy, most blacks agreed, was to minimize contacts with whites wherever possible and to appear obedient when necessary." See Mozell C. Hill, "Basic Racial Attitudes Toward Whites in the Oklahoma All-Negro Community," *American Journal of Sociology* 49, no. 6 (May 1944): 519-23. Also, Wayne K. Durrill, "The South Carolina Black Code," in *True Stories From the American Past,* ed. William Graebner (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 2-4. See Roger D. Hardaway's excellent bibliographical essay on all-Black towns, in *African Americans on the Western Frontier,* eds. Monroe Lee Billington and Roger D. Hardaway (Niwot, CO: Univ. Press of Colorado, 1998), 249-51.

According to a Jewish scholar, whites came to believe that the old master–slave relationship could only be an "integrated relationship—whites ruling over Negroes through constant association." The Black Towns put "the Negro outside of the reach of the 'controlling' white hand." See Lawrence J. Friedman, "In Search of Uncle Tom: Racial Attitudes of the Southern Leadership, 1865-1920" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California Los Angeles, 1967), 162 and passim. Strong leaders like Martin Delany advised Blacks "not to work for any man, but for themselves," causing one white man to describe him as "a thorough hater of the white race…" Victor Ullman, *Martin R. Delany: The Beginnings of Black Nationalism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 330.

Jim Crow: "The most barbarous series of laws ever written"

And he said unto
Abram, Know of a
surety that thy seed
shall be a stranger in
a land that is not
theirs, and shall
serve them; and they
shall afflict them
four hundred years.

—

Genesis
15:13

The term *Jim Crow* is the name of a highly popular minstrel show character invented around 1828 by Thomas "Daddy" Rice, a white entertainer who donned blackface to ridicule Black culture. The use of a happy-go-lucky entertainment figure to describe brutal acts of racial repression that prefigured Nazism is a testament to the desire of Americans to conceal the true extent of the injustice.[31] Douglas Blackmon addressed this point directly:

> Imagine if the first years of the Holocaust were known by the name of Germany's most famous anti-Semitic comedian of the 1930s. Let us define this period of American life plainly and comprehensively. It was the Age of Neoslavery.[32]

The *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* makes a direct connection between Jim Crow and Nazism:

> The physical segregation of the whites from the blacks was the most far-reaching measure introduced in the Reconstruction period (1865-1877) that followed the Civil War….The same charges that in Europe were leveled against the "inferior" Jewish race were raised in America against the blacks as well…[33]

In actuality, the post-slavery Jim Crow laws, customs, and practices had been in effect in America from its colonial beginnings, and were known as black codes, or slave codes. They were applied to all "nonwhites," but the African and the Native American were the first to suffer the effects of this diabolical racial scheme.[34]

Essentially, Jim Crow was intended to redirect the "freed" slave back into plantation labor, and, according to the Black scholar W.E.B. Du Bois, the South was "simply an armed camp for intimidating black folk," its laws "deliberately designed to take advantage of every misfortune of the Negro." Although whites lost *individual* rights over their Black slaves, they sought to enforce *societal* rights over Black destiny—thus, all Blacks would in essence *belong* to the entire community of whites.[35] As Kenneth Stampp put it, the purpose of Jim Crow

> was to keep the Negro, as long as possible, exactly what he was: a propertyless rural laborer under strict controls, without political rights, and with inferior legal rights.[36]

When South Carolina formulated its racial laws, one planter reminded the framers that

> the general interest of the white man and of the negro requires that…he should be kept as near to the condition of slavery as possible....[N]egroes must be made to work, or else cotton and rice must cease to be raised for export.

He suggested that the Black Code should prohibit all freedmen "from ever owning Real Estate" and that the very idea of land ownership should never cross their Black minds. He believed that the Black Codes should contain a "stringent" law that would require every Black person to show proof that "he is in the lawful employ of some white man."[37] His directives were followed religiously not only in his own state, but throughout the South.[38]

Moreover, these laws created among Blacks a permanent consumer class that was legally barred from competing with whites on any level of trade or industry.[39] This effectively forced Blacks into a specific role in the American economy such that any money they might acquire through their wages could never be retained and leveraged for their own growth and development. Indeed, one "law" on the books made it illegal for Blacks to "misspend" their own money. These laws were carefully designed to siphon any potential Black wealth directly into white hands through a one-way-only retail and commerce system—a condition that largely exists today.

A review of the legal devices by which whites enforced Black inferiority in all aspects of life is in order. The laws themselves varied from county to parish, from city to town, and from state to state,

but in essence they always functioned to serve the greater purpose of white supremacy.[40] The racist aims of the Black Codes earned them the fitting description "the most barbarous series of laws ever written by a civilized people."[41] They are hugely important to our study because Jim Crow law was in fact the political, social, and economic framework that dictated the fortunes and failures of both Blacks and Jews in post-slavery America. Here are just a few that were actually enacted in the Southern states during this post-emancipation period, *after* Blacks had been legally "freed":

- Blacks could not be employed in any jobs other than plantation labor without a specific license granted by a judge, and the employer had to be white.[42]

- All Blacks had to make binding one-year contracts with planters within the first ten days of January, after which written permission was required if Blacks wanted to leave the property.[43] If a Black worker had a dispute and left his job, he could be arrested and put on a public works project until he agreed to go back to his original employer.

- Blacks were prohibited from buying or renting farmland except in designated all-Black (but white-controlled) areas. Blacks could be barred from entering whole towns, or allowed entry only at designated times with a pass stipulating specific activities.[44]

- So-called vagrancy and “idle” laws were established specifically to ensnare any Black man who was not on a plantation or headed to one.[45] Blacks in the process of seeking work could be assailed, incarcerated, whipped, and then auctioned off into peonage to any white man who paid their fines.[46]

- Children as young as three could be “involuntarily apprenticed” to a plantation if a judge found the parents to be “paupers” or “vagrants.” Children as young as ten could be forced into labor “contracts” with planters. Child labor laws enacted during this time specifically did not apply to Black children.

- Black laborers could not accept another job without permission from the first employer.

- Blacks could be barred from practicing their trade unless they proved they had been an “apprentice” to a white man.[47]

- Every contract required at least one party to be a white man for it to be valid. One state decreed that having “one-eighth or more of negro blood” was adequate cause to void contracts.

- Black testimony was prohibited in court, so a contract made by a Black person could not be enforced if a

white man chose to dishonor it. White rapists, thieves, murderers, and Ku Klux Klansmen were immune from prosecution for any act perpetrated against any Black man or woman. Courts would not convict a white man for the rape of a Black girl after she had reached puberty; nor could she sue for child support; nor could the mixed-race child inherit property of his own father. A Mississippi law eventually became the law of the South:

> All negroes [sic], mulattoes, Indians, and persons of mixed blood, descended from negro [sic], or negro [sic] and Indian ancestors, to the third generation inclusive, though one ancestor in each generation may have been a white person, shall be incapable of being witnesses in any case whatever, except for or against each other.[48]

- Blacks were not allowed to bear arms for their own use, so hunting (with guns) was off-limits, as was basic self-defense.[49]
- South Carolina required that any Black man entering the state had to, within twenty days, have two white men post a bond guaranteeing his good behavior.
- Taxes, fees, and tests were established for Black voters, but not for whites.
- Taxes were applied to certain occupations solely to keep Blacks out. These fees were “waived” as

necessary for whites.

- Blacks were forbidden to sell farm products like flour, cotton, hay, rice, peas, wheat, etc., without written permission from a white man, thus disallowing independent Black agri-business and eliminating Black competition.

- The penalty for any alleged misbehavior, such as not working at an acceptable pace, exhibiting disrespect or disobedience—as determined by whites alone—could result in dismissal without any wages due for the entire year; hence a return to virtual slavery. Such punishments as hanging by the thumbs[50] and public whippings were common.

- The law set the hours of labor "from sun-rise to sun-set," and even specified actual tasks. Black workers were to "feed, water and care for the animals on the farm, do the usual and needful work about the premises, prepare their meals for the day, and begin the farm work or other work"—all before sunrise.[51]

Special laws applied only to Blacks for such acts as fighting, trespassing, seditious speech, insulting gestures, preaching the gospel without a license, and many other frivolous behaviors—all designed to make almost any waking act by a Black man or woman punishable by law when any white man so desired.[52]

Additionally, Blacks were barred from any recreational activities with or near whites. They were prohibited from using “white” public parks, or from using the same public beaches or pools, showers, toilets and fountains, or from being buried in the same cemetery section as whites. A white baseball team could not play “on any vacant lot or baseball diamond within two blocks of a playground devoted to the Negro race.” Libraries were required to set up separate branches for whites and Blacks—in the rare event that Blacks were “granted” such facilities. It was unlawful to serve whites and Blacks in the same dining room unless a partition of at least seven feet separated them.

In Alabama, white female nurses could not work where “negro men are placed.” Liquor establishments had to serve either whites exclusively or Blacks exclusively. All circuses, shows, and tent exhibitions had to have two ticket windows that “shall not be less than twenty-five feet apart.” Black barbers, who often staffed “white only” shops, were prohibited from cutting the hair of white females. Hospitals, prisons, reform schools, mental health facilities, libraries, schools, train stations, retail stores, restaurants, public halls, theatres, motion picture shows—all required separate entrances, fountains, and toilets for each race or separate facilities altogether, if they were provided for Blacks at all.

Out of this madness emerged an *unwritten* species of conduct, known commonly as Southern “racial etiquette,” which added yet another layer of degradation to Black–white interaction. These unlegislated edicts are what forced Black women off the sidewalk at the approach of white men, averted Black eyes from white ones, and made the backdoor of a white Southern home the only entry point for

Blacks.[53] They forced a sitting Black man to his feet in the presence of whites, allowed only whites to initiate or end an interracial conversation, compelled Blacks to utter "suh" or "ma'am" at least once in every complete sentence, and required that Blacks wait until all whites were served before they could make purchases in retail markets.[54]

A provision in the Louisiana law set the basic tone for the whole South:

> [Blacks] ought never to presume to conceive themselves equal to the white; but, on the contrary, they ought to yield to them in every occasion, and never speak or answer to them, except with respect.[55]

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31 David Carlyon, *Dan Rice: The Most Famous Man You've Never Heard of* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), 46.

32 Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009), 402.

33 *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, ed. Israel Gutman (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 1212; Stephen J. Whitfield, "In the High Cotton," review essay, *SJH* 4 (2001), 127: "Jim Crow was fully embedded in the legislative and juridical structure of the region. But antisemitic laws could gain no traction and could not be effectuated; there was simply no way for the power structure to single out Jews as targets of persecution." See also Judy Scales-Trent, "Racial Purity Laws in the United States and Nazi Germany: The Targeting Process," *Human Rights Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (May 2001): esp. 296-300; Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg, eds., *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 13-14; James A. Wax, "The Attitude of the Jews in the South Toward Integration," *CCAR Journal,* June 1959, 15: "The white Southerner's intense opposition to integration is, to a degree, comparable with the Nazi attitude toward the Jew." See also Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, "The Nazis and Dixie," chap. 4 in *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 157-200.

34 For instance, the *Code Noir* (or Black Code) of Louisiana was enacted by the king of France in 1724 to better manage the commerce in Africans in that French territory. It was officially known as A Royal Edict Touching on the State and Discipline of the Black Slaves of Louisiana. Vernon Valentine Palmer, "The Customs of

Slavery: The War without Arms," *American Journal of Legal History* 48, no. 2 (April 2006): 182ff.

35 W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903; reprint, New York: Gramercy Books, 1994), 81; W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (1935; reprint, New York: Simon & Schuster, Touchstone, 1995), 167; Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, 245; Elliot Jaspin, *Buried in Bitter Waters: The Hidden History of Racial Cleansing in America* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 35ff; Joel Williamson, *After Slavery: The Negro in South Carolina During Reconstruction, 1861-1877* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1965), 72-79. Also, W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Economic Future of the Negro," *Publications of the American Economic Association*, 3d ser., 7, no. 1 (Feb. 1906): 224-25; William Cohen, "Negro Involuntary Servitude in the South, 1865-1940: A Preliminary Analysis," *JSoHis* 42, no. 1 (Feb. 1976): 31-60; J.T. Trowbridge, *The South: A Tour of Its Battlefields and Ruined Cities* (1866; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1969), 408: "It was thought necessary to make a serf of him who was no longer a slave." Lenora E. Berson, *The Negroes and the Jews* (New York: Random House, 1971), 18-20; Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1974), 98. See also Ella Lonn, "Restoration of White Rule," chap. 21 in *Reconstruction in Louisiana after 1868* (1918; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1967), 495-525.

36 Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (New York: Knopf, 1965), 79; William Cohen, *At Freedom's Edge: Black Mobility and the Southern White Quest for Racial Control, 1861-1915* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1991), 28ff; David Brown and Clive Webb, *Race in the American South: From Slavery to Civil Rights* (Gainesville, FL: Univ. Press of Florida, 2007), 180-81.

37 Williamson, *After Slavery*, 75; Durrill, "The South Carolina Black Code," 10; Robert H. Zieger, *For Jobs and Freedom: Race and Labor in America Since 1865* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2007), 44ff.

38 Pete Daniel, "The Metamorphosis of Slavery, 1865-1900," *JAH* 66, no. 1 (Jan. 1979): 96. This is not to suggest that these conditions were confined to the South. The North was no less racist in its collective behavior toward "nonwhites." But with far fewer Blacks in the Northern states, there was no need to commit their racist customs to law.

39 Bobby M. Wilson, "Race in Commodity Exchange and Consumption: Separate but Equal," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): passim, esp. 588-89, 598.

40 It should be noted that the absence of a law did not mean that certain activity or behavior by Blacks was permitted. Its absence meant that Blacks in that locale had not yet exhibited their free will to the extent necessary to warrant legislative restrictions and that the social and economic customs had adequately suppressed Black progress. The repression of Blacks by whites characterized all of American society, and the written code served as the enforcement method of last resort for whites.

41 William A. Sinclair, *The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 40. For a full discussion see "Reconstruction and the

Southern 'Black Code,'" chap. 2 in ibid., 37-73, esp. 57-73. Also, Harold D. Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," in *Black Southerners and the Law, 1865-1900,* ed. Donald G. Nieman (New York: Garland, 1994), 448-49.

42 See for example Juliet E.K. Walker, *The History of Black Business in America: Capitalism, Race, Entrepreneurship* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), 151-52.

43 Oscar Zeichner, "The Transition from Slave to Free Agricultural Labor in the Southern States," *Agricultural History* 13, no. 1 (Jan. 1939), 26: "'In many instances negroes who walked away from the plantations, or were found upon the roads, were shot or otherwise severely punished.'"

44 Irving Kovarsky and William Albrecht, *Black Employment: The Impact of Religion, Economic Theory, Politics, and Law* (Ames, IA: Iowa State Univ. Press, 1970), 39. Blacks did, in fact, own land in some places in the South at various times—if Black land ownership was distinctly beneficial to the whites in the area—but the location, the quality, and the size of farms operated by Blacks were severely proscribed. Many of these regional prohibitions still exist, most famously in places like Forsyth County in Georgia, which eliminated its Black population and is today practically a "white" county. See Jaspin, *Buried in Bitter Waters*, 129-35, 307-9; John Dittmer, *Black Georgia in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1977), 23-26ff; and Mandle, "Sharecropping and the Plantation Economy," 122-23. As late as 1914—a half century after "emancipation"—the *Atlanta Constitution* featured a writer who questioned whether "negroes should be allowed to own lands to too great an extent." See J.T. Holleman, "Does Cotton Oligarchy Grip South and Defy All Plans for Diversification and Relief?" *AC,* 27 Sept. 1914, p. B3, col. 6. Hundreds of "sundown towns," which barred Blacks from entry after sundown, existed all over America (many of them in the North). See James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: New Press, 2005). Ironically, the largest builder of these towns in the post–World War II era was a Jew, William Levitt, whose leases for his massive Levittown housing developments forbade the very presence of "any person other than members of the Caucasian race." Ibid., 441 and plate 31. Also, Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks: A Travel Guide and History*, vol. 2 (New York, 1979), 69.

45 Zeichner, "The Transition from Slave to Free Agricultural Labor," 27: "Plantation discipline was especially harsh. In some cases the methods of punishment that had been used during slavery were applied to the freedmen in an attempt to secure a subdued and steady labor force."

46 It could take ten years to pay off a ten dollar fine. "Du Bois stated that the whole court system degenerated into a scheme to rob blacks of any cash they might have." See Donald L. Grant, *The Way It Was in the South: The Black Experience in Georgia* (New York: Birch Lane, 1993), 148-52. Whites defined "leisure time" as *any* time Blacks were not working for them. According to one account in Mississippi, "any of the white people could send for any Negro

woman to come and do the family washing…[and she h]ad to take whatever they paid..." See Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 157; and her *American Work: Four Centuries of Black and White Labor* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998), 243. See also Michael Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure: The Southern Farmers' Alliance and Cotton Tenancy, 1880-1890* (New York: Academic Press, 1976), 31. Blacks used their "leisure time" to pursue education, take on second and third jobs, hunt and fish to supplement their diets, and participate in political or church activities. They developed such cultural treasures as Black music, dance, and art, which famously spawned an industry worth billions of dollars and which continue to create untold riches for white imitators and businessmen. See Gerald D. Jaynes, "Blacks in the Economy from Reconstruction to World War I," in *Upon These Shores: Themes in the African-American Experience, 1600 to the Present*, eds. William R. Scott and William G. Shade (New York: Routledge, 2000), 172-73; Vincent Harding, *There Is A River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), 307-8, 310; Gerda Lerner, *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 75-113; Shelly Tenenbaum, *A Credit to Their Community: Jewish Loan Societies in the United States, 1880-1945* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1993), 22.

47 For example see John C. Willis, *Forgotten Time: The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta After the Civil War* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 2000), 20-23.

48 James T. Currie, "From Slavery to Freedom in Mississippi's Legal System," *JNH* 65, no. 2 (spring 1980): 114. Long a New York law—see *The Colonial Laws of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution*, vols. 1 & 2 (Albany, 1894).

49 Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 26.

50 Christopher Waldrep, "Substituting Law for the Lash: Emancipation and Legal Formalism in a Mississippi County Court," *JAH* 82, no. 4 (March 1996): 1426, 1437, 1448.

51 Durrill, "The South Carolina Black Code," 12. This was a holdover from slavery when farm animals were rested in shifts but slaves worked through the day and, when necessary, by moonlight. See John B. Cade, "Out of the Mouths of Ex-Slaves," *JNH* 20, no. 3 (July 1935): 315.

52 For examples see Currie, "From Slavery to Freedom in Mississippi's Legal System," 112-25; John Hammond Moore, "Jim Crow in Georgia," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (autumn 1967): 554-65; Albert P. Blaustein and Robert L. Zangrando, eds., *Civil Rights and the American Negro: A Documentary History* (New York: Trident Press, 1968), 217-25; Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, passim; W.E.B. Du Bois, "Reconstruction and Its Benefits," *American Historical Review* 15, no. 4 (July 1910): 784-85.

53 Stetson Kennedy, *Jim Crow Guide: The Way It Was* (1959; reprint, Boca Raton, FL: Florida Atlantic Univ. Press, 1990), 223-24; J. William Harris, "Etiquette, Lynching, and Racial Boundaries in

Southern History: A Mississippi Example," *American Historical Review* 100, no. 2 (April 1995): 391; McMillen, "Jim Crow and the Limits of Freedom," 194. It should be noted with emphasis that the term "etiquette" would never be applied to such a disgraceful practice except in an American racial context—certainly no one has ever used the term "Nazi etiquette" in reference to identical customs of the Nazi era.

54 Bertram Wilbur Doyle, *The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South: A Study in Social Control* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1937), 153; Bertram W. Doyle, "The Etiquette of Race Relations—Past, Present, and Future," *Journal of Negro Education* 5 (April 1936): 193, 194, 198, 200, 201; Kennedy, *Jim Crow Guide*, 203-27; McMillen, "Jim Crow and the Limits of Freedom," 190-98; Harris, "Etiquette, Lynching, and Racial Boundaries in Southern History," 391. The use of "suh" as opposed to "sir" is an important distinction, as "sir" was thought to be too "educated" a response and thus disrespectful to whites. For more examples see William F. Holmes, "Whitecapping: Anti-Semitism in the Populist Era," *AJHQ* 63, no. 3 (March 1974): 251-52; Leslie Alexander Lacy, *The Rise and Fall of a Proper Negro* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 71.

55 Doyle, "The Etiquette of Race Relations," 203. See Robin D. G. Kelley, "'We Are Not What We Seem': Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *JAH* 80, no. 1 (June 1993): 75-112.

Orgy of Terror & Violence

The imposition of this repressive regime on a population of at least four million who believed themselves to be free could never have been achieved without violence. Wholesale killings of Blacks occurred across the South with alarming frequency and shocking depravity. Most of these open racial slaughters resulted from attempts by Blacks to assert their citizenship rights, such as by voting or seeking political office or by acquiring land or education, as well as other unwelcome manifestations of Black progress.[56] But much of it was just pure race hate. As one scholar wrote of postwar whites: "They loathed the Negro and… were ready to hunt him like an animal." So many Blacks were slaughtered in one incident in a Texas county that "vultures became a nuisance."[57]

In Memphis, Tennessee, in 1866, a mob of whites was said to have exhibited "a deadly hatred of the colored race" as it joined police officers in murdering at least 46 innocents and injuring 285.[58] Rampaging whites raped Black women and burned four Black churches and twelve Black schools. In New Orleans, Louisiana, that same year, white mobs murdered 34 and injured more than 200.[59]

Similar incidents occurred in Pulaski, Tennessee; Opelousas, Louisiana; Eutaw, Alabama; Laurens, South Carolina; and Camilla, Georgia. Officially, 54 racist murders were recorded in Mississippi in 1869, and 83 in 1870. In 1871, every schoolhouse for Black children in Winston County was burned, and in Meridian thirty Blacks were killed. In that year, a U.S. government investigation concluded that the Ku Klux Klan was assaulting Blacks and "torturing them in the most inhuman manner," but officials did little to abate the violence.[60]

NEGROES HUNTED ALL NIGHT
BY MOBS MADE UP OF BOYS,

And Four Blacks Are Killed, a Number Wounded and Badly Beaten and Several Shops Looted,

With the Police Making No Arrests and Showing Inefficiency to Protect,

American Pogrom. *Daily Picayune (New Orleans)*, July 26, 1900. Murderous mobs attacked Blacks throughout the United States. According to the article, "The supreme sentiment was to kill negroes, and every darky they met was ill treated and shot."

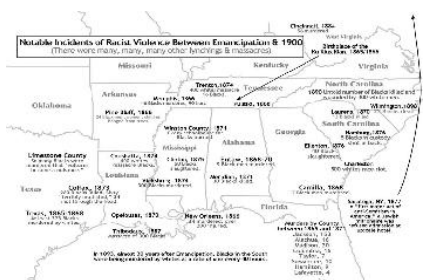
In 1868, whites began a killing spree in Shady Grove, Louisiana, and indiscriminately murdered up to 200 innocent Blacks. On Easter Sunday of 1873 in Colfax, Louisiana, "[t]he bloodiest single instance of racial carnage in the Reconstruction era" occurred when 280 Blacks were left for dead, sixty of them "terribly mutilated" and strewn throughout the countryside. Thirty-four others had been taken to a riverbank and shot through the head. Authorities tried none of the perpetrators, claiming the massacre was "a justifiable assertion of white supremacy."[61] Several Black men were murdered by a mob of 300–400 white men in an 1874 massacre in Coushatta, Louisiana.[62]

In 1874–75, after years of violence, white Mississippians overthrew the legally constituted interracial government. As many as 300 Blacks were murdered (along with 2 whites) in Vicksburg in two separate incidents in 1874 when whites on a killing spree swept the county. Between 35 and 50 Blacks along with radical white leaders were slaughtered in Clinton in September 1875.[63]

In 1874, a murderous mob of 400 armed Tennessee whites stormed the Trenton Jail and

massacred all 16 of the Blacks confined there. Their bodies were found at the bottom of a river a mile away.[64] In 1876 in Hamburg, South Carolina, whites forced their way through a group of parading Black militia. Two dozen of the Blacks were arrested and five were murdered while in custody—they were told to run and then shot in the back. In Ellenton, federal troops helped local whites slaughter at least 40 Blacks, including a legislator in the state's House of Representatives.[65] In Charleston, five hundred white vigilantes converged on Blacks, killing one and wounding eleven.

In 1884, a white mob murdered 56 people in Cincinnati, Ohio, and burned down the city's courthouse. In 1887, in what has become known as the Thibodaux Massacre, Louisiana whites slaughtered as many as 300 Black sugar plantation workers because they were organizing for better conditions. In 1890, a North Carolina mob of 400 white men, "led by prominent citizens and public officials," killed and wounded an untold number of Blacks.



And this is merely a sample of the *documented* violence against Blacks. Much of the bloodshed went unreported or was concealed in the nightriding rituals of the many Caucasian secret societies and vigilante organizations spun off from the Ku Klux Klan. By 1893, almost thirty years after

"emancipation," Blacks in the South were being murdered at a rate of at least one every 40 hours.[66]

Today this violent and oppressive "Jim Crow" history is represented in popular culture as no more than the mere inconveniences of water fountain and lunch counter discrimination. But this masks the real purpose and devastating effects of the many violent acts of white supremacy: the destruction of any Black aspirations for economic self-development, the confinement of the African to forced plantation and domestic labor, permanent political subjugation, and perpetual societal inferiority.

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56 See the descriptions of the violence as well as the political statistics, in "Louisiana: Speech of Senator Morton in Indianapolis," *NYT,* 23 Sept. 1874, 2; "Louisiana Horrors," *NYT,* 25 Nov. 1876, 1; and esp. "The Louisiana Reports," *NYT*, 24 Feb. 1875, 2. Also, Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America,* 672-87; John A. Carpenter, "Atrocities in the Reconstruction Period," *JNH* 47, no. 4 (Oct. 1962): 234-47; Gilles Vandal, "'Bloody Caddo': White Violence against Blacks in a Louisiana Parish, 1865-1876," *Journal of Social History* 25, no. 2 (winter 1991): 373-88. These acts of violence were actually called "negro hunts." Ibid., 379. See also Gilles Vandal, "The Policy of Violence in Caddo Parish, 1865-1884," *Louisiana History* 32, no. 2 (spring 1991): passim, esp. 168ff; Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1999), 94-115; Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States,* vol. 2, *From the Reconstruction Era to 1910* (1951; reprint, New York: Citadel Press, 1966), 572-606, esp. 593-99; Ralph Ginzburg, comp., *One Hundred Years of Lynchings* (1962; reprint, Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1988). Political office was achieved by Blacks in some Southern states (more rarely in the North), and such achievement is often claimed to be evidence of Black progress. But any progressive legislation enacted by Black lawmakers was simply disregarded if it challenged white supremacy. Ultimately, a wave of white supremacy movements after 1877 swept Blacks out of elective office.

57 Saloutos, "Southern Agriculture," 60; Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America,* 670-87; C.S. Bradley, "A Sketch of Limestone County," *Groesbeck Journal,* 15 May 1936, sec. 3, p. 1; Leon Joseph Rosenberg, *Sangers': Pioneer Texas Merchants* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1978), 25.

58 Selma S. Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt: The Jewish Community of Memphis, Tennessee, 1840s-1960s* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1998), xi, 2, 34, 46-47; Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 250.

59 John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction: After the Civil War* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961), 62-64. See also Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, 45-46; Walter White, *Rope and Faggot: A Biography of Judge Lynch* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 95; *NYT,* 23 Sept. 1874, 2.

60 William C. Harris, *The Day of the Carpetbagger: Republican Reconstruction in Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1979), 396-98; *Report of the Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States, So Far As Regards the Execution of the Laws, and Safety of the Lives and Property of the Citizens of the United States and Testimony Taken,* 42d Cong., 2d sess., 1872, S. Rept. 41, serial 1484-1496; Vernon Lane Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (1947; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 185-93.

61 Gilje, *Rioting in America*, 95 and passim; Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 437; Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed,* 268-70. See *NYT,* 18 April 1873, 1; 19 April 1873, 3; 23 Sept. 1874, 2.

62 *NYT,* 2 Sept. 1874, 1; 4 Sept. 1874, 1; 10 Aug. 1877, 1.

63 Elisha Benjamin Andrews, *The United States in Our Own Time* (New York, 1903), 142-43; *NYT*, 25 Dec. 1874, 2; Harris, *The Day of the Carpetbagger*, 647-48, 661, 684.

64 *NYT*, 30 Aug. 1874.

65 Blacks formed militias in self-defense against white terrorism, as for example in Greene County, Georgia, in 1867. See Edward L. Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984), 157-58; *NYT*, 26 July 1876, 4; 7 Aug. 1876, 5; 1 June 1877, 5; 5 June 1877, 4; 3 Aug. 1877, 5; Stephen David Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2000), 74.

66 Sig Synnestvedt, *The White Response to Black Emancipation: Second-Class Citizenship in the United States Since Reconstruction* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 56, 57.

Jews in Jim Crow: “A hotbed of philo-Semitism”

I long to breathe the
free air of Dixie.

—

Jewish
Confederate
soldier

The Jewish experience in the South after the American Civil War was distinctly different in all respects from the life that confronted the “freed” Black man and woman. Ex-slaves “Toby” and “Govie” were cast into a hostile wilderness with no resources beyond their own will to survive, but the journey from Russia to the former Confederacy for Jewish immigrant Abraham Bisno hardly resembled the Black experience. Bisno’s family emigrated in 1881 and as they passed through the various European cities on their way to port, they were showered with donations and well-wishes. The city of Liverpool, recalled young Abraham, “furnished food and clothing for the entire transport.”

> Finally we landed in New York, and were stationed in a boarding house that gave us so much meat to eat that I was sick for three days. It was the first meal there. I remember that I could not then conceive of how anyone could actually get more meat than he could eat…

Bisno’s entire family was processed into a system that assured their success:

> Our family…[was] sent to Atlanta, Georgia, and [was] there provided for with rooms, furniture, house utensils, and such other things as we needed—besides money enough to live on until we found work. We found work practically within the first week there….[S]o together we brought $14.50 home every week.

Within nine months the Bisno family had *saved* $500 and was well on its way to full absorption into Southern society.[67] By contrast, the average *annual* income of a Black farm family in this time was about $150. While the Jim Crow noose choked off Black aspirations and independence, Southern Jews were enjoying unbridled economic, social, and political opportunities. Jim Crow laws never applied to Jews at anytime anywhere in the South; nor were they subjected to the systematic terror suffered on a daily basis by the Black ex-slave.

And though the postwar picture was bleak for Americans generally, the war had actually proved to be a financial boon to many of the 150,000 Jewish Americans. Dr. Mark I. Greenberg affirmed that Jews saw "opportunities to make money by selling supplies to the…Confederate government."[68] Gabriel Jacobs manufactured military caps for the pro-slavery fighters, 54,000 of whom were supplied and fed by Raphael Moses. Louis and Herman Haiman crafted the Confederate soldiers' swords and guns, and David Lopez, Jr. built torpedo boats for the Confederate Navy. Simon and Frank Rothschild mass-produced the army uniforms, supplying 5,000 during the first year of the war. Gustav Bernd made saddles for the Confederate Army cavalry; the firm of Cohens & Hertz kept the army stocked with nails. Octavus Cohen provided

rifle powder to the Confederate Army; Einstein & Eckman furnished 7,000 blankets; Dan Merz and Heyman Heyman made the soldiers' leather boots; and the Solomons brothers supplied a range of goods, including drugs, hardware, tools, clothing, cotton, and a myriad of other items. These Jewish merchants "found opportunities to profit amidst the calamity" as they faithfully kept the forces of Black repression well stocked and battle-ready.[69]

All whites profited from the forced labor of the enslaved African, and business-minded Jews were among those with the most to gain. After the war they quickly reestablished cross-sectional business ties and amplified their financial gains. North and South, Jews successfully avoided the wholesale disruption that affected almost every other ethnic group and maintained a communal cohesiveness that enabled them to enjoy an unprecedented affluence—the result of their Civil War profits. An official of Lincoln's government had actually deemed the main Jewish organization, the B'nai B'rith, to be a "disloyal organization" that "help[ed] the traitors."[70] In fact, wrote Jewish historian Dr. Hasia Diner, it "continued to function…as though no war had torn the country in two." Jewish soldiers who had fought on both sides continued their relationships after the conflict, "as though nothing had happened."[71]

As for their posture on the critical race question, Jews as a whole did not view the system of slavery as particularly offensive to their way of life and were thus almost totally and unapologetically absent from any involvement in the abolition movement—a position that openly vexed the leaders of that cause. Moreover, in the realm of business and finance Jews failed to use their specialized skills and economic position to assail the

foundations of Black slavery.[72] And after the Civil War, even as news of the racist violence, lynchings, and massacres reached around the globe, Eastern European Jews arrived in increasing numbers—6,000 in 1881 and 74,000 in 1892—all fully believing that the American pogroms would continue to target Blacks, Indians, and other "nonwhites" and have *no deleterious effect* on their chances for success as immigrants in America.

As part of the rising wave of immigration to the United States, Jews with retail market skills far beyond that of the average white American were arriving from Europe. By 1880 the Jewish population would reach 250,000, and then quadruple to one million by 1900; by 1914 two million East European Jews had "flooded to" America. The slave states welcomed a small but significant share of Jewish immigrants, and by 1860 approximately 33,000 Jews resided in the South, nearly a quarter of those in Louisiana. The increase in the number of synagogues in the South (from six to 20 in the 1850s alone) was strong testimony of the Southerners' hospitality toward Judaism. Indeed, 81.8% of Southern cities had Jewish accommodations (religious and secular centers), but only 54.8% of Northern cities did.[73] There were no insurmountable barriers to this influx of Jewish peddlers, traders, and entrepreneurs, and no restrictions on their activities. Several Jewish colonization and immigrant aid societies stood prepared to transplant almost entire East European communities to various places across America.

Once they arrived, Jews accepted and assimilated the Jim Crow philosophy and became some of the most capable and reliable functionaries in its widespread enforcement. They sought no alliance with the Black ex-slave, instead adapting to

America's racist traditions as they strategically pursued their own agenda for success.[74]

And in their new American environs—in the very midst of crushing Black poverty and oppression—Jewish success was magnificent, even stunning. In fact, according to Barry Chiswick, Jews living in the South "had a statistical advantage in earnings and opportunities."[75] They unhesitatingly joined all other white Americans in their determination to use Black labor to build an economic foundation that would help them realize their American dream.

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67 Abraham Bisno, *Union Pioneer* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1967), 44-47. That $500 savings is worth $11,900 today.

68 Mark I. Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity in Nineteenth-Century America: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830-1880" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Florida, 1997), 130; Clive Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations in the American South, 1790-1970" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Cambridge, 1997), 78. Barry E. Supple, "A Business Elite: German-Jewish Financiers in Nineteenth-Century New York," *Business History* 31 (1957): 154, wrote: "For most of them the Civil War brought prosperity—at least to some degree." Walter Ehrlich, *Zion in the Valley: The Jewish Community of St. Louis,* vol. 1, *1807–1907* (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1997), 172-73. See also section on Jews and the Confederacy in *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 1991), 157-68.

69 ISJL, "Athens, Georgia"; ISJL, "Columbus, Georgia"; ISJL, "Macon, Georgia"; ISJL, "Savannah, Georgia"; ISJL, "West Point, Georgia"; Barry L. Stiefel, "The Lopez Family of Newport and Charleston and Its Heirloom," *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 15, no. 3 (Nov. 2009): 402.

70 Stanley Rabinowitz, *The Assembly: A Century in the Life of the Adas Israel Hebrew Congregation of Washington, D.C.* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, 1993), 47.

71 Hasia R. Diner, *A Time for Gathering: The Second Migration, 1820-1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992), 157; Mark K. Bauman, *The Southerner As American: Jewish Style* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1996), 14; Mark K. Bauman, "A Multithematic Approach to Southern Jewish History," in *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America*, ed. Marc Lee Raphael (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2008), 270-71; Mark K. Bauman, "The Flowering of Interest in Southern Jewish History and Its Integration into Mainstream History," in *Religion in the Contemporary South: Changes, Continuities, and Contexts*, eds. Corrie E.

Norman and Don S. Armentrout (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2005), 169-70.

72 Morris U. Schappes, ed., *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States, 1654-1875* (New York: Citadel Press, 1950), 332-33; Claud Anderson, *Black Labor, White Wealth: The Search for Power and Economic Justice* (Edgewood, MD: Duncan & Duncan, 1994), 19 [in section titled "The Black-Jewish Alliance"].

73 The number of synagogues in America increased from six in 1825 to seventy-seven in 1860. Henry L. Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1982), 35. By the eve of the Civil War, a roughly estimated 22 percent of the Jewish population in the United States had settled in the South (33,000 of 150,000). And that number (33,000) represented only .22 percent of the total population in the South (15,000,000). See Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978), 281 n. 18, 231 table 2. Actual figures are difficult to obtain, surmises Rabbi Debra Kassoff (*Circa* 12, no. 3 [fall 2003]: 5), because of a Jewish aversion to censuses, based in Exodus 30:11-16: "Apparently it was thought that simply being counted—enrolling in a census—places one's life in danger." The prevalence of itinerant Jewish peddlers throughout the South in various times and places makes an accurate count nearly impossible. Also, see Jacob Rader Marcus, *To Count a People: American Jewish Population Data, 1585-1984* (Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 1990) for state-by-state Jewish population estimates. Also, Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s–1990s* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994), 77; Elliott Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem: Jewish Businessmen in Louisiana, 1840-1875" (Ph.D. diss., George Washington Univ., 1983), 12; April Elaine Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl': Jewish and Catholic Responses to New South Industrialization, 1880-1914" (Ph.D. diss., Temple Univ., 2002), 39; Dennis C. Rousey, "Aliens in the WASP Nest: Ethnocultural Diversity in the Antebellum Urban South," *JAH* 79, no. 1 (June 1992): 160.

74 For instance, Eric L. Goldstein, "'Now is the Time to Show Your True Colors': The Jewish Approach to African Americans," chap. 3 in *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006).

75 Barry R. Chiswick, "Jewish Immigrant Skill and Occupational Attainment at the Turn of the Century," *Explorations in Economic History* 28 (Jan. 1991): 77-78.

Jews & Southern Race Relations

Despite the South's reputation for racial hostility, the noted Jewish writer Harry Golden insisted that the Protestant fundamentalists of the Southern Bible Belt greeted the Jew with open arms.

> And this may come as a surprise to many people: nowhere in America was the Jew received with greater generosity.[76]

Alabama Jew Edwin A. Zelnicker similarly claimed that in the South, "Jews enjoyed an unparalleled degree of acceptance from the larger community."[77] In many respects they were welcomed and accepted more so in the South than in the North, and there was a greater degree of interaction between Jews and white Gentiles. Jewish chronicler Israel Joseph Benjamin explained the phenomenon in the Civil War era:

> The white inhabitants felt themselves united with, and closer to, other whites—as opposed to the Negroes. Since the Israelite [Jew] there did not do the humbler kinds of work which the Negro did, he was quickly received among the upper classes and easily rose to high political rank.[78]

Jews joined the "most prestigious clubs, literary societies and socialized with elite families." In many instances they were also the club founders.[79]

The gruesome realities of lynching and pervasive Ku Kluxism have contributed to the belief that anti-Jewish prejudice was stronger in the South

than in other sections of the United States, but Jewish author Harry Simonhoff warns that

> it would be only fair to repudiate charges of extreme antipathy. *The reverse is probably closer to truth.* In the older cities of the deep South, anti-Semitism is less marked than in many metropolitan centers or rural settlements of the East or West.[80]

In this environment, wrote the Jewish South Carolinian August Kohn, one can find a "good and peaceful home" and "help with all problems."[81] Oscar Straus, a member of the family that would eventually own Macy's department store, wrote that when his father was peddling through the rural areas of Georgia, he "was treated by the owners of the plantations with a spirit of equality that is hard to appreciate today."[82] Isaac Hermann was one of the many, many immigrant Jews who fled oppression in Europe only to eagerly enlist in the Confederate Army to fight to maintain Black slavery. He truly loved the South:

> I found…an ideal and harmonious people; they treated me as one of their own; in fact for me, it was the land of Canaan where milk and honey flowed.

Rabbi James Gutheim of New Orleans likewise saw the American South as a land where the blessings of providence "have been showered upon us."[83]

Dr. Jeffrey S. Gurock, professor of Jewish history at Yeshiva University, effortlessly coupled two apparently contradictory ideas: "Southern Jewry was born within an antebellum slave society.

It has grown and prospered...” Later in the article he added the unproblematic caveat, *“…as long as [Jews] lined up properly on the all-important race issue* [emphasis ours].”[84] Dr. Harold Brackman makes the same seemingly incongruous claim that immigrant Jews arrived in the South “to the heightened social acceptance and community status that undeniably were theirs in slave society.”[85] Charles Stember agreed with his Jewish colleagues that

> The South has traditionally been one of the least anti-Semitic regions in the nation, and a considerable body of data suggests that it remained so until the 1940s.[86]

Jewish historian Louis Schmier reported that in Dixie a “general congeniality developed between Jew and gentile.” He said, “It would be *an understatement* to say they were well-liked.”[87] Robert N. Rosen studied the lives of Jewish Confederates and concluded that “the Old South was remarkably free of prejudice against Jews.”[88]

At least twenty-three towns in the South are named for Jews, including Manassas, Virginia; Kaplan, Louisiana; Felsenthal, Goldman, and Levy, Arkansas; Marks, Mississippi; and even Jewtown, Georgia. In Shreveport, Louisiana—the scene of some of the bloodiest anti-Black violence in American history—several streets are named after prominent Jews, including Weinstock, Holzman, March, Bernstein, Levy, and Levin Streets. Even the Fort Myers military base was named after the Jewish Confederate officer Abraham Myers.[89]

Far and wide Jews received a hearty welcome and effusive praise from their Gentile neighbors. In 1855, during the height of Southern slavery, the *St.*

Louis Republican asserted, "no other portion of the population gives less trouble." The *Valdosta [Ga.] Times*, says Schmier, "was not easily given to words of tribute, but when it came to the Jews the words overflowed."[90]

In more than one Southern town, wrote University of North Carolina professor Leah Hagedorn, "the area where Jews lived was referred to fondly as 'Little Jerusalem.'" Jews boasted of their closeness to their Gentile Dixie compatriots. The Atlanta-based *Jewish South* newspaper—a paper in which Gentiles freely advertised—reported of a town celebration in 1879 in Marion, South Carolina: "On this, like all other occasions of public interest, the Israelites of our town pla[y] a conspicuous part."[91] In Nashville, Tennessee, "Jew and Gentile worked together, attended school together, supported public and civic movements" and, according to Fedora Small Frank, Jews faced "very little of anti-Semitism."[92]

The longtime owner of the *New York Times,* Adolph Ochs, was a Jewish Southerner. He first published the *Chattanooga Times* in Nashville, where Jews opened social clubs noted for their opulence and splendor. These ritzy establishments hosted Jewish debutante and costume balls, dinner parties and dances, festivals and elaborate receptions and offered leisure activities such as billiards, cycling, and casino gambling. The Jewish Concordia Club (later reorganized as the Standard Club) acquired the moniker "Monte Carlo of the South." Jews lived comfortably in the same privileged "Lookout Mountain" section of Chattanooga called a hotbed of race hate by the Reverend Martin Luther King in his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963.[93]

A *Jewish South* reader from Marion, South Carolina, insisted that

> No one is treated with the least disrespect, because he is a Jew, and the secret of all this can be gained in the fact, that we take an interest in everything appertaining to the interest and welfare of our town…municypal [sic] affairs, Masonic, Temperance, Politics, or religious matters…

Jews in Little Rock, Arkansas, it was reported, "enjoy the respect and good will of all classes of our citizens, and deservedly so." In 1873, a Mississippi Jew wrote to the popular Jewish newspaper *Israelite* of "the utter absence of prejudice among our Christian fellow-citizens." In Charlotte, North Carolina, the postwar "influx" of Jews was welcomed and anticipated. The same was reported by the slave-owning Barth family of Missouri.[94]

Brandeis University professor Jonathan Sarna wrote that during this post–Civil War period dozens of Jewish congregations grew in size, stability, and prosperity, and numerous edifices were erected, "many with elaborate decoration in Romanesque Moorish style, attest[ing] to the confidence and optimism of their builders."[95] In fact, the South led the nation in the number of synagogues per capita (one for every 600 Jews), compared with the national average of one for every 1,300 Jews.[96] Harry Golden, himself a Southerner, adamantly maintained that in the small and rural country towns—where traditional hatred of Blacks is the most acute—"[s]egregation of Jew and Gentile disappears entirely." In fact, he says, the Jew is really in an enviable position:

> He is "our" Jew to small-town Southerners, and they often take care of him with a zeal and devotion otherwise

> bestowed only on the Confederate monument in the square.

Golden continues with a remarkable assessment of Jewish life in deep Southern Klan country:

> The Jewish merchant takes his regular turn as president of Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Retail Merchants, Country Club, Chamber of Commerce, and Community Chest. And it is precisely his "conspicuousness," his Jewish religion, that gives him a security and allows him a relaxation that would be the envy of his co-religionists of the metropolitan areas of the North, or for that matter, of the larger urban centers of the South.

Golden concluded, "There is no social segregation whatsoever, no quota system."[97] Jews actively boasted to their families back in the Old World of their success and happiness in the apartheid South[98] and urged them to relocate to the region. Newspapers like the *Jewish South* adopted a form of New South boosterism, "to glorify Southern progress."[99] New Orleans' *Jewish Ledger* unreservedly claimed that the South "stands boldly out, and with outstretched hands invites you to settle there."[100]

In Savannah, Georgia, a half dozen Jews signed the constitution of the local chamber of commerce. Jewish Savannahians eagerly invested time and energy in citywide associations and enjoyed "a relatively high level of access to Christian organizations," wrote Mark I. Greenberg.[101] And the Jews of Alabama "became a vital and highly respected part of their communities."[102] The slaveholding Charleston rabbi Gustavus Poznanski

summed up the Jewish American credo:

> This [Charleston] synagogue is our temple, this city our Jerusalem, this happy land our Palestine, and as our fathers defended with their lives that temple, that city, and that land, so will our sons defend this temple, this city, and this land.[103]

The historian of Charleston Jewry,[104] James Hagy, concluded that Rabbi Poznanski's beliefs were so widespread among South Carolina Jews that he could accurately title his book *This Happy Land*.[105]

The language used to characterize Jewish Southern society during the darkest years of Black oppression may be surprising to those who maintain the belief that Jews were collateral sufferers of the many injustices endured by Black Americans. But there is really no evidence to support that widespread but misinformed notion.

Referring to the violence and discrimination of this era, historian Rayford W. Logan labeled it America's Dark Ages.[106] On the other hand, the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience has romanticized the postwar period from 1865 to 1910, actually calling it the "golden age of southern Jewry." They further correlate this period to the very time "when cotton was king"—a time when the misery of Black cotton plantation workers was arguably at its height.[107] Similarly, David Sampliner, who produced a documentary on Southern Jewry, calls the Reconstruction period the "golden age of Jewish settlement in the Deep South"; and yet another scholar calls the era the "halcyon days of modern Jewish history."[108] And

this Southern acceptance could be measured in real financial terms. Avraham Barkai wrote that many of the German-Jewish immigrants "were successful in improving their economic situation during these years, and some may have amassed considerable fortunes."[109] Bruce S. Allardice confirms:

> Nowhere else in the United States had Jews been as fully accepted into the mainstream of society. Nowhere else in the United States had Jews become as fully integrated into the political and economic fabric of everyday life.[110]

Another important scholar of Southern Jewish history, Dr. Leonard Dinnerstein, assesses the lot of the Jews and relates it directly to the position they held *vis-à-vis* Black slavery:

> Since the main problem of the ante-bellum South revolved around slavery, Jews did not loom as a threat because, in their quest for amalgamation, *they had accepted the institution*. At one point this was, indeed, the test of a true Southerner. Thus Jews could rise to the highest positions in the South and often did.[111]

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76 Harry Golden, interview by Sol Littman, in *Harry Golden on Anti-Semitism, Jews, Christians, Race Relations, Negroes, Whites, Civil Rights, States Rights, the South, the North, Social Action, and Some Other Matters* (New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1966), 28. The National Chairman of the Anti-Defamation League, Dore Schary, wrote that "Harry Golden is valiant and fights for the Lord"; hence, "no one can take lightly what Golden has to say…" See foreword to ibid.

77 Edwin A. Zelnicker, Jr., preface to *The Gates of Heaven: Congregation Sha'arai Shomayim, The First 150 Years, Mobile, Alabama, 1844-1994*, by Robert J. Zietz (Mobile, 1994), xii. A recent study of

Jews in the New South concludes that "In the end, Jews' integration in communities across the South did in fact reflect a wide degree of acceptance." See Patrick Q. Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," *SJH* 8 (2005): 109; Stephen J. Whitfield, "Jewish Fates, Altered States," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 304; Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 2000), 32.

78 See I.J. Benjamin, *Three Years in America, 1859-1862,* vol. 1, trans. Charles Reznikoff (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956), 76; Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates*, 31.

79 Marilyn Kay Cheatham Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric: Nineteenth-Century Jewish Merchants Living Texas Reality and Myth" (Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M Univ., 2003), 235; Leah Elizabeth Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South, 1858-1905" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999), 234; Daniel R. Weinfeld, "Samuel Fleishman: Tragedy in Reconstruction-Era Florida," *SJH* 8 (2005): 60.

80 Emphasis ours. Harry Simonhoff, *Under Strange Skies* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953), 243.

81 Jenna Weissman Joselit, "Psalms of the South: Museum Celebrates Charleston Culture," *Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 8, no. 1 (winter 2003): 7.

82 Jacob Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 2:291. Also quoted in Harold D. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of Black-Jewish Relations Through 1900, Part 1" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1977), 271; Bertram W. Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865," *PAJHS* 50, no. 3 (March 1961): 200. According to Korn, the path of the Jew "was made easier by the institution of slavery." On "equality," see Robert Liberles, "Conflict over Reforms: The Case of Congregation Beth Elohim, Charleston, South Carolina," in *The History of Judaism in America: Transplantations, Transformations, and Reconciliations,* ed. Jeffrey S. Gurock (New York: Routledge, 1998), 589-90. Said a prominent Charleston Jew: "America's civil liberty has no parallel in the history of the world." See also Kenneth Libo and Irving Howe, *We Lived There Too* (New York: St. Martins, 1984), 140-44.

83 Bruce S. Allardice, "'The Cause a Righteous One': Louisiana Jews and the Confederacy," in *Louisianians in the Civil War,* eds. Lawrence Lee Hewitt and Arthur W. Bergeron, Jr. (Columbia, MO: Univ. of Missouri Press, 2002), 72. On the willingness of Jews to fight for slavery, see Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 62ff; Rosen, "Jewish Confederates," 114; ISJL, "LaGrange, Georgia."

84 Jeffrey Gurock, "The Jews of Dixie: A New History," *Response* 12, no. 1 (summer 1979): 73, 74, 75; Andrea Oppenheimer Dean, "Dixie Diaspora," *Preservation* (July/August 2000): 6.

85 Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 271.

86 Charles Herbert Stember et al., *Jews in the Mind of America* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), 390; Howard N. Rabinowitz, "Nativism, Bigotry and Anti-Semitism in the South," *AJH* 77 (1988): 446.

87 Emphasis ours. Louis Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta,"

Georgia Historical Quarterly 62, no. 1 (spring 1978): 35, 45.

88 Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 2000), 31.

89 Eli N. Evans, *The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 70; LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 445; Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992), 5; Eric J. Brock, *The Jewish Community of Shreveport* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2002), 13; Allardice, "'The Cause a Righteous One,'" 78.

90 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 93; Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 45. Also, Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 81.

91 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 114, 182, 244. The terms "Israelites" and "Hebrews" were commonly and respectfully used in reference to Jews. See also Lewis Lord, "Matzos and Magnolias," *U.S. News & World Report*, 25 May 1998, 53: "But Jewish merchants, cotton planters, and cotton buyers once were so influential in Woodville [Miss.], the county seat, that it was known as 'Little Jerusalem.'" In the 1870s downtown Tarboro, North Carolina, was nicknamed "Little Jerusalem." See ISJL, "Tarboro, North Carolina"; Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010), 132.

92 Fedora Small Frank, *Beginnings on Market Street: Nashville and Her Jewry, 1861-1901* (Nashville, 1976), 91.

93 Ibid., 95, 98-100; Jean Roseman, "Barney and Clyde: A Tale of Murder and Madness," *SJH* 10 (Nov. 2007): 216-17; Fedora Small Frank, "Nashville Jewry During the Civil War," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (fall 1980): 320; Susan E. Tifft and Alex S. Jones, *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind the New York Times* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1999), 406. This wealthy lifestyle existed among the Jews in ancient Babylonia. See Rabbi Julius Newman, *The Agricultural Life of the Jews in Babylonia Between the Years 200 C. E. and 500 C. E.* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1932), 25-28.

94 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 174, 233; Selig Adler, "Zebulon B. Vance and the 'Scattered Nation,'" *JSoHis* 7, no. 3 (Aug. 1941): 363; ISJL, "Charlotte, North Carolina"; Harvey A. Kantor, "The Barth Family: A Case Study of Pioneer Immigrant Merchants," *Missouri Historical Review* 62 (1968): 412, 417, 420, and passim. A possible relative, Solomon Barth, was at one time the "owner of the entire Grand Canyon." See the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, "Collections," 1990-2005, http://www.americanjewisharchives.org/aja/collections/01_f.html. Barnett A. Elzas, *The Reformed Society of Israelites: History and Constitution* (New York, Bloch, 1916), 11: "In South Carolina, from the day of its settlement, the Jew has never labored under the slightest civil or religious disability whatsoever." The Jews, he said, lived in "an atmosphere of perfect civil and religious freedom…"

95 Jonathan D. Sarna, "From the Civil War to 1880," http://www.jewishgates.com/file.asp?File_ID=48; also, Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A New History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2004), 124. Sarna (p. 125) wrote that Jews wanted simply to "make

non-Jewish friends and visitors feel welcome" and "to improve Judaism's public image." See also Peter Wiernik, *The History of Jews in America: From the Period of the Discovery of the New World to the Present Time* (1912; reprint, New York, 1931), 243-44; Rousey, "Aliens in the WASP Nest," 160, 161.

96 Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, 23. Lewis writes that Southern Jews are "more Jewish than many from other regions."

97 Harry L. Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South: Segregation at Sundown," *Commentary,* Nov. 1955, 403-4; Albert S. Lindemann, *The Jew Accused* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 227; Charles Wyszkowski, *A Community in Conflict: American Jewry During the Great European Immigration* (Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 1991), 219.

98 Based on Jim Crow, *apartheid* (an Afrikaans/Dutch word) was the official policy of racial segregation practiced in the Republic of South Africa; it involved political, legal, and economic discrimination against the 90 percent of the population that is "nonwhite." As they were in the American South, Jews were important contributors to the apartheid system in South Africa.

99 Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl,'" 77. Also, Bert James Loewenberg, "Efforts of the South to Encourage Immigration, 1865-1900," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 33, no. 4 (Oct. 1934): 370-71, 376-77, and passim. Many inducements were offered to white immigrants that were never offered to Black "citizens," including tax breaks and promises that the Black population would be thoroughly suppressed. See ibid., 370, 377; and Walter L. Fleming, "Immigration to the Southern States," *Political Science Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (1905): passim, esp. 284. A wealthy Philadelphian named Hamilton Disston purchased four million acres of land in the Florida Everglades and offered land to the Russian Emigrant Relief Committee for the settlement of Jewish pogrom refugees. See Irving Lehrman, "Jewish Community of Greater Miami: 1896-1955" (paper presented at the Proceedings of the Conference on the Writing of Regional History in the South, with Special Emphasis on Religious and Ethnic Groups, convened by Western Reserve University, Western Reserve Historical Society, and American Jewish History Center of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Cleveland, Ohio, December 1955), 117–117-a.

100 Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl,'" 81; Sanford Ragins, "The Image of America in Two East European Hebrew Periodicals," *AJA* 17, no. 2 (Nov. 1965): 143-61. Also, Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 31.

101 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 126, 223, 244.

102 "The Jews of Alabama," *Jewish Press,* 9 June 1995, 59.

103 Joseph Henry Gumbiner, *Isaac Mayer Wise, Pioneer of American Judaism* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1959), 76; David Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), 466-67. Reform Jews were programmatically against Zionism, mostly because they believed, as can be seen in the above quotation, that the South was in fact their

"Promised Land." Also, Abraham J. Peck, "That Other 'Peculiar Institution': Jews and Judaism in the Nineteenth Century South," *Modern Judaism* 7, no. 1 (Feb. 1987): 102. The significance of territory such as the South being *perceived* by Jews as the "Promised Land" is discussed in the *Babylonian Talmud*, a book of Jewish law that confers upon Jews a sanctified co-ownership of the land with God Himself, and a preferential status over Gentiles. See Jacob Neusner, "Why Does Judaism Have an Economics?" (paper presented at The Inaugural Saul Reinfeld Lecture in Judaic Studies, Connecticut College, New London, Conn., April 1988), 12-18. A major Jewish figure of the nineteenth century *and* an unrepentant racist, Mordecai Manuel Noah, saw America as the Jews' "chosen country." See Robert Gordis, "Mordecai Manuel Noah: A Centenary Evaluation," *PAJHS* 41, no. 1 (Sept. 1951): 7.

104 Charleston had a larger and more refined Jewish community than anywhere else in America. See *UJE* (1948), s.v. "Charleston." Ibid., 116: By 1816, the Jewish community of Charleston was the "'largest, most cultured and wealthiest' Jewish settlement in the United States." By 1830, 1,200 of America's 6,000 Jews resided in Charleston. Melvin M. Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo: Economic Thought in the Antebellum South* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1966), 7.

105 Gemma Romain, "The Jews of Nineteenth Century Charleston: Ethnicity in a Port City," paper presented at Seascapes, Littoral Cultures, and Trans-Oceanic Exchanges, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., February 12-15, 2003, http://www.historycooperative.org/proceedings/seascapes/romain.html; James William Hagy, *This Happy Land: The Jews of Colonial and Antebellum Charleston* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1993). A Jewish merchant wrote in 1902 that Aiken, South Carolina, is "paradise itself…the Garden of Eden." See ISJL, "Aiken, South Carolina."

106 Rayford W. Logan, *Betrayal of the Negro: From Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (1965; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1997), xx.

107 Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, "Program Mission: Why We Do What We Do," Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, 2001, http://www.msje.org/programs_mission.html. Also, Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates*, 35: "They had experienced a freedom unknown to Jews anywhere else in the world. They had been accepted by their fellow citizens of the Old South…[an acceptance not experienced] since the Golden Age of Jewry in medieval Spain." See Chaim Bermant, *The Jews* (New York: Times Books, 1977), 24-25, who writes that under Muslim rule in Spain "Jews were able to prosper and rise to the highest offices of state and there was a flowering of Jewish culture such as had not been known in any of the previous centuries of exile."

108 David S. Sampliner, "Telling the Story: A Collective Oral History of Monroe," *Circa* 9, no. 1 (spring 2000): 15; Adler, "Zebulon B. Vance," 368.

109 Avraham Barkai, *Branching Out: German-Jewish Immigration to the United States, 1820-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1994), 115.

110 Allardice, "'The Cause a Righteous One,'" 73.

111 Emphasis ours. Leonard Dinnerstein, *The Leo Frank Case* (1968; reprint, Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1987), 66.

The Insatiable Jewish Desire to be White

…Jews love to ape the actions of the dominant population…

—Harry Simonhoff, B'nai B'rith

As will be demonstrated, Jews eagerly entered the American South with an almost single-minded devotion to trade and profit. Their long experience in the European business world made them virtually unchallengeable in this pursuit, and their legal and social status as whites removed all potential racial and religious obstacles. And here is where a troubling pattern emerges in the context of Black–Jewish relations. According to Jewish scholars, Jews attached an "enormous importance to their status in the eyes of white Gentiles" and diligently worked within this highly racialized society to reinforce their status as whites.[112]

This was a significant cultural departure from the centuries of European exclusivity that kept them in eternal conflict with Gentile society. Their tendency to create an insular and distinctly Jewish communal environment—or "ghettoize" themselves—wherever they settled was more or less standard Jewish practice and almost always by their own preference.[113] Certainly, when they appeared as traders in the slavery outposts of the Caribbean, they—*by their own choosing*—tried to encode into

law their self-imposed separation from the Gentiles.[114]

Jewish sociologist Louis Wirth discussed this tendency in his book *The Ghetto*: "The poorer Jews who come to this country [United States] naturally flock together and inhabit whole districts, which come to assume the appearance of ghettos." It is the same, he wrote, in London, Amsterdam, Paris, Vienna, and other large cities of Europe.[115]

This age-old Jewish pattern of cultural separatism simply evaporated in the American South, and was replaced by a desire for full cultural integration.[116] "It was part of their effort to win the prestige that ordinarily follows wealth, and also to break with their immigrant past," Harry Golden explained.[117] Dr. Bryan Edward Stone focused in on Texas: "Throughout their history, Texas Jews had manifested an almost unquestioned commitment to acculturation."[118] In Louisiana, writes Elliott Ashkenazi, Jews had an "irresistible urge to conform."[119] Likewise in Georgia, Mark I. Greenberg found, "The importance of middle-class and southern identity to Jewish efforts at acceptance cannot be overstated."[120] The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, Greenberg elaborates,

> adopted distinctly southern modes of thought and behavior; that is, they constructed southern identities to accompany their ethnic affiliations. They purchased slaves, championed states' rights and the Confederacy…and supported the region's strict racial hierarchy based first upon slavery and later upon coercion and intimidation.[121]

This Southern Jewish strategy certainly did not

bode well for Blacks, or for any prospect of a Black–Jewish alliance. As Steven Hertzberg wrote, "The process of americanization entailed adopting the… negative attitudes toward blacks."[122] Marilyn Goldman listed the three characteristic signs of true Southernness: (1) acceptance of the code of Southern "honor," (2) ownership of Black slaves, and (3) a commitment to states' rights and the Confederate war effort. And in this pursuit, she says, the "Jews were no different than most other Southerners."[123]

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112 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 171, 173, 184.

113 Moses Kligsberg, "Jewish Immigrants in Business," in *The Jewish Experience in America: Selected Studies from the Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society,* vol. 5, ed. Abraham J. Karp (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 259 n. 8:

> The traditional Jew makes no attempt to enter into social relationships with Gentiles…He is not troubled in the least by the fact that the Gentile world may exclude him from clubs or personal relations. If anything, the contrary was true. It was precisely this type of Jew for whom this thought was furthest from his mind. It was the secular Jews, who…perceive[d] social intercourse with Gentiles as a symbol of equality of rights…

114 See for instance George Fortunatus Judah, "The Jews' Tribute in Jamaica," *PAJHS* 18 (1909): 172-73. See also *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, 1:75-76 n. 277.

115 Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1928), 121-22.

116 This Jewish impetus to integrate is variously termed by scholars as assimilation, Americanization, acculturation, and integration.

117 Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South," 408. See also Gary P. Zola, "Why Study Southern Jewish History?" *SJH* 1 (1998), 6: "Southern Jewry has been, and remains to this day, distinctive because of how its Jewish residents have attuned themselves to the region's unique history, culture and state-of-mind."

118 Bryan Edward Stone, "West of Center: Jews on the Real and Imagined Frontiers of Texas" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Texas at Austin, 2003), 269. Carolyn Lipson-Walker calls it "accelerated conformity to Southern culture," in "'Shalom Y'all': The Folklore and Culture of Southern Jews" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana Univ., 1986), 386.

119 Elliott Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem: Jewish Businessmen in Louisiana, 1840-1875" (Ph.D. diss., George Washington Univ., 1983), 174.

120 Greenberg, “Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity,” 15; Eric L. Goldstein, “‘Now Is the Time to Show Your True Colors’: Southern Jews, Whiteness, and the Rise of Jim Crow,” in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 135-36.

121 Greenberg, “Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity,” 271, 253-54. See also an interesting parallel in an observation by Tunisian Jew Albert Memmi, who described the French occupation of his country (1881-1956) in his *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, trans. Howard Greenfield (New York: Orion Press, 1965), xiv:

> The Jewish population identified as much with the colonizers as with the colonized….[U]nlike the Moslems, they passionately endeavored to identify themselves with the French. To them the West was the paragon of all civilization, all culture. The Jew turned his back happily on the East. He chose the French language, dressed in the Italian style and joyfully adopted every idiosyncrasy of the Europeans….For better or for worse, the Jew found himself one small notch above the Moslem on the pyramid which is the basis of all colonial societies. His privileges were laughable, but they were enough to make him proud and to make him hope that he was not part of the mass of Moslems….The Jews bore arms side by side with the French [against the Muslims] in the streets of Algiers.

Memmi further elaborates on the psychology of the colonized. See ibid., 121ff. Also, Iuliu Herscovici, *The Jews of Vicksburg, Mississippi* (Xlibris, 2007), 48.

122 Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 191.

123 Goldman, “Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric,” 63-65; Mark I. Greenberg, “Becoming Southern: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830-70,” *AJH* 86, no. 1 (1998): 55-75; Ferris and Greenberg, *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 8; Wendy Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses: Memoir of a Southern Jewish Woman* (Jackson, MS: Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 2000), 18.

The Southern "Anti-Semitism" Myth

On what spot in this habitable globe does an Israelite enjoy more blessings, more privileges, or is more elevated in the sphere of preferment, and more conspicuously dignified in respectable stations? Where can similar instances be noted of the various appointments held by so great a majority of a few of the persuasion? Have we not ample cause to exult?

—Jacob de la Motta dedicating the Savannah, Georgia, synagogue, 1820

Popular writing about the Southern Jewish experience is often peppered with the

unsupportable assertion that "anti-Semitism" and the fear of it ruled the lives of Southern Jews. This fallacy is most often advanced to imply that "anti-Semitism" was responsible for the complete and total refusal of Jews to take any moral stand on the question of Black slavery and its brutal aftermath—the American system of apartheid, Jim Crow. For example, Jewish historian and rabbi Malcolm Stern wrote in the race-sensitive 1970s that in the decades between the Civil War and World War II—a period of eighty years:

> no Southern rabbi seems to have made any attempt to deal with the race question. The fear of anti-Semitism… remained so pervasive throughout the South, that few (if any) Jewish laymen or rabbis would have had the courage to speak out on so *unpopular an issue* as the rights of blacks.[124]

Citing no actual evidence, historian Mark Cowett concluded that Jews "could not afford to oppose traditional Southern attitudes of black inferiority."[125] Similarly, Dr. Leah Hagedorn alluded to a "tide of prejudice that enveloped the Jewish community." Included in her litany of alleged bigotry was behavior that Jews actually visited upon themselves: "Many Southern Jews felt abused and ignored by their Northern counterparts"—that is, other Jews. And "even the relatively positive remarks that Gentiles made about Jews" should be considered "anti-Semitism" if they "were economic in nature." According to Hagedorn such *praise* "made Southern Jews cringe."[126]

Another scholar, Raymond Arsenault, contends that "rising anti-Semitism drove many Jews from the mainstream of Southern life…with an outburst

of night-riding forays against Jewish merchants in Louisiana, Georgia, and Mississippi."[127] Nevertheless, the very same scholar in the very same article asserts the contrary:

> [T]here is no evidence that this trend was so pronounced that it fundamentally altered the lives and careers of most Southern Jews. In short, unlike that of the black man, the overall position of the Jew in Southern society remained fundamentally secure...[128]

State University of New York professor David A. Gerber, who wrote a whole book on American anti-Semitism, insists there was "a deepening hostility" against the Jews because of their financial dealings. He claims the Jews suffered from "an elite anti-Semitism" and the Protestants "controlled the flow" of Southern finance[129]—all claims contradicted by a wealth of scholarly evidence to the contrary.[130] And such claims are irreconcilable with the theme consistently reiterated by Harry Golden that "[t]here is very little real anti-Semitism in the South. There is even a solid tradition of philo-Semitism."[131]

In actuality, there is little to suggest that Jews were victimized by "anti-Semitism," *especially in the South*, and there is even less to suggest that their negative views of their fellow Black citizens were dictated by a fear of it. Prior to the Civil War Jews could have easily refused involvement in the slave trade or the slave system. In America, about seven percent of whites owned slaves (though all, directly or indirectly, benefited from the slave-based economy), but Jewish slave-ownership per capita was double the national average—meaning Jews were twice as likely as Gentiles to enslave

Africans.[132] Jews could easily have joined the majority (93%) of Americans in refusing to own Black human beings and they would not have offended any law or custom. The Quakers were also a minority immigrant religious group, yet they ultimately took a stand against slavery on the basis of the Biblical dictum "Do unto others." Some Quakers in the South even migrated north in principled objection to the culture of slavery. Quakers formed the backbone of the abolition movement and many served as "conductors" on the Underground Railroad. Quaker minister Lucretia Mott refused to use cotton cloth, cane sugar, and other slavery-produced goods.

For their ethical stand the Quakers faced not a single act of retribution from the larger body of Americans.[133] On the other hand, evidence shows that Jewish Americans were publicly and privately hostile to abolitionism and that a substantial number fought vehemently for the rights of slaveholders. Jews owned and traded in Black slaves and were involved in "every aspect"[134] of the Black Holocaust—during and after slavery—for no other reason than it increased their wealth to do so. Indeed, Rabbi Dr. Bertram W. Korn, the most prominent Jewish scholar of Civil War-era Jewry, stated:

> There is no iota of evidence, no line in a letter, no stray remark, which would lead us to believe that these Jews gave conscious support to the slave system out of fear of arousing anti-Jewish prejudice.[135]

No synagogue minutes, no rabbinical sermons, no articles or editorials in Jewish newspapers, or any other type of communication intended for

Jewish eyes has yet been found that contains any collective sympathy for the plight of the Black ex-slaves. On the contrary, when Jews did speak out on the issue of the "rights of blacks," it appears that they most often opposed them.[136]

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124 Emphasis ours. Malcolm H. Stern, "The Role of the Rabbi in the South," in *"Turn to the South": Essays on Southern Jewry,* eds. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1979), 29-30; also Rosen, "Jewish Confederates," 110.

125 Mark Cowett, "Rabbi Morris Newfield and the Social Gospel: Theology and Societal Reform in the South," *AJA* 34 (1982): 69.

126 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 90. Her "proof" included the case of one Gentile whom she charged with being "hardly philo-Semitic," suggesting that this is synonymous with being "anti-Semitic." Ibid., 89 n. 77, 147, 97. Hagedorn provides no source for this collective "cringing." For *Jewish* praise of Jewish business dominance in the South, see Schmier, *Reflections of Southern Jewry,* passim.

127 Raymond Arsenault, "Charles Jacobson of Arkansas: A Jewish Politician in the Land of the Razorbacks, 1891-1915," in *"Turn to the South,"* 55. He does not cite proof for the "outburst" he refers to. For Jewish involvement in the Ku Klux Klan, see this volume's chapter titled "Jews, Lynching, and the Ku Klux Klan."

128 Arsenault, "Charles Jacobson of Arkansas," 56.

129 David A. Gerber, "Cutting Out Shylock: Elite Anti-Semitism and the Quest for Moral Order in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Market Place," *JAH* 69, no. 3 (Dec. 1982): 617.

130 See this volume's chapters on Jewish commerce in the South, titled "Forty Acres & the Jews" and "All About the Benjamins."

131 Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South," 403.

132 Ira Rosenwaike, *On the Edge of Greatness: A Portrait of American Jewry in the Early National Period* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1985), 66. Also Lee Soltow, "Economic Inequality in the United States in the Period from 1790 to 1860," *Journal of Economic History* 31 (1971): 825-26; Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery," 157. "[A]lmost 40 percent of all Jewish householders in the United States owned one or more slaves." See Mary Stanton, "At One with the Majority," *SJH* 9 (2006): 144; Harold Brackman, "Black–Jewish Relations in the Nineteenth Century," *Encyclopedia of American Jewish History* (2008), 2:418.

133 See for instance A. Glenn Crothers, "Quaker Merchants and Slavery in Early National Alexandria, Virginia: The Ordeal of William Hartshorne," *Journal of the Early Republic* 25 (spring 2005).

134 Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery," 163; Jacob Rader Marcus, foreword to *Jews of the South: Selected Essays from the Southern Jewish Historical Society*, eds. Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1984), vii. See also Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 1 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press,

1989), 585-86; Bauman, *The Southerner As American,* 11-13; and Wendy Lowe Besmann, *A Separate Circle: Jewish Life in Knoxville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2001), 171.

135 Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery," 199; Harry Golden, *Our Southern Landsman* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), 108.

136 *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, 1:143-61.

White Southerners Embrace "Their" Jews

It is important in our study to establish the actual extent of this despicable religious antagonism called "anti-Semitism"—if it existed at all in the South—because of its centrality to the Jews' representation of their historical relationship with Blacks. It is well established that the Jim Crow laws and customs institutionalized racism against Blacks. It was pervasive, systemic, and intractable, but did Jews share in that suffering, as many Jews have claimed? And, if not, what exactly was their role in the highly racialized dynamics of the region?

The overwhelming weight of the evidence shows the very opposite of what we have been told to expect. Jews—who had once been rejected as "Christ-killers" in every corner of the globe—belonged to Christian church choirs and attended church revivals and even Bible schools in the American South. "They were proud of their participation and acceptance," wrote one scholar. The Christians in the American Bible Belt, wrote another, saw the Jews favorably as "another group with strong religious convictions."[137] And many Jewish scholars, rabbis, and residents of the South have reached similar conclusions, though their findings have not undermined the tenacious myth of Jewish suffering in the South. An important book on the Black–Jewish relationship reports that

> Probably in no other region of the United States have they been so integrated with the general population or subjected to less discrimination.[138]

Anti-Semitism was a distant concept to Louisiana Jews, who, as a community, had reached

virtual economic and social nirvana. According to historian Dr. Timothy Reilly, “Judaism experienced almost no opposition” and “gained an uncommon respect from the Christian sector.” The first “king” of New Orleans’ famous Mardi Gras celebration, a venerable tradition as sacred as it is Southern, was Jew Louis Solomon in 1872. Notable among the Jews was the “frequency of intermarriage between Jew and Gentile in New Orleans,” a phenomenon that “heavily underscored the high degree of acculturation and cordiality which existed in both religious sectors.” From every Jewish quarter, the reports of Gentile–Jewish relations were effusive with positivity. Rabbi Max Heller wrote, “[T]he social life of New Orleans was virtually innocent of anti-Jewish discrimination.”[139] In 1861, Salomon de Rothschild wrote from New Orleans to his incomparably wealthy European Jewish banking family: “What is really quite astonishing here, or rather what is not so astonishing, is the high position occupied by our coreligionists...”[140] A Donaldsonville, Louisiana, Jew wrote that the Jews of the community “possess the regard of their fellow citizens.”[141]

New York Supreme Court Justice Joseph M. Proskauer (1877–1971) grew up in Mobile, Alabama, believing that he “lived in a wonderful world where [he] could love and be loved and all was ‘right as right could be.’”[142] And his testimony was in no way unique among Jewish Southerners. The fact is the hostile Old World relationships simply did not make the Atlantic voyage with the masses of white immigrants. It is as if both sides of that ancient and storied conflict simply reset their racial memories and retired all their old grudges, enmities, and vengeances to begin in America with a clean slate. In the mad dash to snatch the profits of Black slavery, there was just no time to

regenerate the old Caucasian religious rivalries.[143] Instead, their propensity for interethnic combat was now transformed into a more prudent and profitable bigotry—American-style racism.

Racism as an operating philosophy worked best for all ethnic Europeans, and surpassed all other classification methods in its effectiveness and ease of application. The African was physically more easily identifiable than the hodgepodge of European ethnotypes, and the legal framework for the necessary racial stratification was already firmly established in the ubiquitous slave codes and customs. Africans could be the lightning rod for the ancient enmities that now flooded in with the immigrants. They could be targeted and exploited, murdered, terrorized, and raped at will—with no societal constraints or consequences.

So *racism* became the great unifier of this motley assemblage of humanity with its dizzying array of languages, religions, political ideologies, and ethnicities. The American system of color-coding effectively eliminated all those differences by assigning the entire African race to one omnipotent and unambiguous classification—*nigger*. The system worked so effectively for the immigrant Jews that their American-born children were entirely unburdened by harsh memories of age-old European interethnic conflict. As Louis Schmier put it, "they approached the issue of Jewish-gentile relations with confident enthusiasm."[144]

Jews were indeed characterized negatively by some *individual* members of white American society at various times and in various places. The stereotyped images of Jews as "Shylocks," as leeches in business, as "Christ-killers," or as uncultured parvenus cropped up from time to time. But none of this isolated animosity found its way

into the laws or customs of any region as it plainly did with Blacks. Jews were never disabled by these rare incidents, and fought them heartily when they did emerge, invariably with vociferous Gentile support.[145] In Georgia, Michael Ehrlich took another man to court on libel charges, alleging "anti-semetic [*sic*] slurs." The incident was such an anomaly, apparently so rare, that Ehrlich misspelled *anti-Semitic* in his complaint.[146]

The editors of the *American Hebrew* maintained that anti-Semitism in its American manifestations reflected *commercial jealousy*, rather than scriptural differences. According to Arthur Hertzberg, even this new redefined economically motivated anti-Semitism—that is, negative attitudes stemming from perceived Jewish misconduct in business, *not their religious practices or beliefs*—was still "far more common in the North than in the South."[147] Addressing this particular aspect of anti-Semitism, Harvard's Oscar Handlin wrote that the Shylock image that had dogged the Jews all around Europe was transformed in America such that the stereotype "involved no hostility, no negative judgment."[148]

Even Leonard Dinnerstein, a dedicated recorder of every perceived anti-Jewish insult, concluded that "these prejudices did not prevent the Jews from attaining a high standing in southern communities"[149]—a collective status that was higher than that of white Gentiles. And whereas "[i]t is possible to find occasional slurs," Handlin concurs that the late-nineteenth-century era was characterized by a "distinct philo-Semitism."[150]

Most conclude, as University of North Carolina professor David Goldfield did, that "Jews rose to prominent political positions in the antebellum South and enjoyed religious freedom to an

unprecedented extent."[151] Other *positive* stereotypes actually aided the Jews' assimilation into Southern society. Jews were widely seen as "socially responsible," and they were seen as having the right sentiments in their political leanings; certainly their economic prowess was in almost desperate demand.[152] Their perceived dislike of Northern Yankees such as President Ulysses S. Grant and their disproportionate service to the Confederate war effort kept them in good stead with the South and its rebel traditions.[153]

The *American Hebrew* took exception to Jewish "oversensitivity," and in 1893 the prominent lawyer Max J. Kohler charged that some Jews were unnecessarily attempting "to arouse a feeling of antagonism" based on alleged but "disproven" anti-Jewish prejudices.[154] Jewish philosopher Otto Weininger charged that "Jews were to blame for their own misfortunes since they, and not the Christians, were the first to set up a wall of separation and isolation."[155] Charleston Jews believed that they "were not altogether guiltless in provoking" the "anti-Semitism" they faced in that city.[156] They all would agree with Harry Golden, who expressed a theme consistently advanced by many scholars of Southern Jewish history:

> The point I hope to establish…is that this "most Gentile" section of America has provided the most favorable "atmosphere" the Jewish people have known in the modern world.[157]

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137 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all,'" 211-12, 234; John C. Willis, *Forgotten Time: The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta After the Civil War* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 2000), 86-87; Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 8.

138 Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Stein, *Bittersweet Encounter: The Afro-American and the American Jew* (1970; reprint, New York:

Schocken Books, 1972), 31. Also, Walda Katz Fishman and Richard L. Zweigenhaft, "Jews and the New Orleans Economic and Social Elites," *Jewish Social Studies* 44 (summer-fall 1982): 292.

139 Alfred O. Hero, Jr., *The Southerner and World Affairs* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1965), 490; Timothy Frank Reilly, "Religious Leaders and Social Criticism in New Orleans, 1800-1861" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Missouri, 1972), 272, 274, 279; Max Heller, comp., *Jubilee Souvenir of Temple Sinai, 1872-1922* (New Orleans: Congregation Temple Sinai, 1922), 41; Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," 104-6.

140 *A Casual View of America: The Home Letters of Salomon de Rothschild, 1859-1861,* trans. and ed. Sigmund Diamond (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1961), 115. African slavery was the source of the Rothschilds' immense wealth. In 1840, of 62 New Orleans Jews identifiable through census returns, only 7 reported *not owning* any slaves (though they may have dealt in slaves or rented them, a common practice at that time). The other 55 enslaved at least 348 Africans (at that moment). According to Bruce S. Allardice, "Numerous Louisiana Jews owned slaves, auctioned slaves, financed plantations that depended on slave labor, and purchased the produce of those plantations." Allardice, "'The Cause a Righteous One,'" 74-75.

141 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 174.

142 Zola, "Why Study Southern Jewish History?" 11-12.

143 Wyszkowski, *A Community in Conflict*, 219-20. At no time, Charles Wyszkowski points out, "did hostility reach the dimensions and nationalistic fervor characteristic of its European counterpart." Also Oscar Handlin and Mary F. Handlin, "The Acquisition of Political and Social Rights by the Jews in the United States," in *American Jewish Yearbook,* vol. 56 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1955), 43, 44.

144 Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 42; Eric L. Goldstein, "The Unstable Other: Locating the Jew in Progressive-Era American Racial Discourse," *AJH* 89, no. 4 (Dec. 2001): 385, 387, 397-98. The Jewish-run slave system in ancient Babylonia, where skin color had not yet emerged as a definitive indicator of one's status, required that a slave be identified by a special necklace. Other indicators were "slave marks," namely, brands, cuts, or tattoos, often in the form of a star, on the forehead or on the hand of the slave. See Isaac Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949), 42-50, 104-5, 140-41 note 56ff; Israel Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages* (London, 1932), 109; and Solomon Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century* (Philadelphia, 1933), 61 notes 97 and 98 (discuss the use of badges). Compare with Nazi Germany, where Jews were said to have been forced to affix a yellow star to their clothing. Slave "badges" were used to identify slaves in South Carolina. See Harlan Greene, Harry S. Hutchins, Jr., and Brian E. Hutchins, *Slave Badges and the Slave-Hire System in Charleston, South Carolina, 1783-1865* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2004), passim, photographs between pp. 66 and 67. For Jewish involvement see pp. 47 (Joshua Lazarus), 60 (Rebecca I. Moses), 90 (Sarah Solomon), 101

(Marks Lazarus), 111 (Moses Jacobs), 112 (Benjamin Cohen), 115 (Solomon Moses). And for Jewish police officer Moses Levy enforcing the use of slave badges, see *Southern Patriot* (Charleston, S.C.), 5 Dec. 1846. See also *Jews Selling Blacks* (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 2010) for other Jewish enforcers of the use of slave badges. Sixty years before the Nazis forced Jews to wear yellow stars, New Orleans trolley cars designated for Black passengers were marked with stars and called "star cars." See "The Star Car Rule Works Both Ways," *New-Orleans Times*, 15 Oct. 1866. The article begins: "A negro soldier who attempted to get in a car for the use of white people was ordered out of the car" and arrested. It clarifies that "the white people should ride in all cars that are not 'starred'." The article appears directly above a notice about a "Hebrew Education Society of New Orleans" meeting, convened by the pro-slavery rabbi James Gutheim, announcing the building of a Hebrew school. (Its charter was signed by 66 Jews in attendance.) The article praises the "intelligence" and "wealth" of the city's Jews.

145 As in the case of Maryland's "Jew Bill" in the 1820s when Gentiles, North and South, rallied in support of the Jewish position. See Liberles, "Conflict over Reforms," 590-91. In addition to the non-immigrant Indian nations, other immigrants were also cast negatively from time to time, such as the Chinese, Japanese, Irish, Italians, Greeks, Mexicans, and others. See also Richard L. Zweigenhaft, *Jews in the Protestant Establishment* (New York: Praeger, 1982), 11; Holmes, "Whitecapping," 250-51; Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," 90, 93, 95; Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *On Equal Terms: Jews in America, 1881-1981* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1982), 24-25. Even "reputed anti-Semites" have expressed profound admiration for Jews. See Louis E. Schmier, "'No Jew Can Murder': Memories of Tom Watson and the Lichtenstein Murder Case of 1901," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (fall 1986): 453.

146 Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 41-42.

147 Yvonne DeCarlo Newsome, "A House Divided: Conflict and Cooperation in African American–Jewish Relations" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern Univ., 1991), 68; Arthur Hertzberg, *The Jews in America: Four Centuries of an Uneasy Encounter, A History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), 135.

148 Oscar Handlin, "American Views of the Jew at the Opening of the Twentieth Century," *American Jewish Historical Society* 40, no. 4 (June 1951): 328.

149 Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson, eds., *Jews in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1973), 9.

150 Handlin, "American Views of the Jew," 323-25.

151 David Goldfield, review of *This Happy Land: The Jews of Colonial and Antebellum Charleston*, by James William Hagy, *AJH* 83 (1995): 133-34. See also Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 225.

152 See this volume's chapters on Jewish commerce in the South, titled "Forty Acres and the Jews" and "All About the Benjamins."

153 Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 39.

154 Wyszkowski, *A Community in Conflict*, 223.

155 Ibid., 226.

156 Liberles, “Conflict over Reforms,” 589.

157 Harry L. Golden, *Jewish Roots in the Carolinas: A Pattern of American Philo-Semitism* (Greensboro, NC: Deal Printing, 1955), 6. He calls the Carolinas a “completely free society” and a “300-year-old ‘laboratory of philo-semitism.’” See Harry L. Golden, “The Jewish People of North Carolina,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 32, no. 2 (April 1955): 195-96. Richard L. Zweigenhaft specifically interrogates these statements in “The Jews of Greensboro: In or Out of the Upper Class?” *Contemporary Jewry* 4, no. 2 (spring/summer 1978): 60-76, and concludes (p. 71) that his “findings support the contention of Golden…” See also Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880-1920*, vol. 3 of *The Jewish People in America*, ed. Henry L. Feingold (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992), 165.

The Case of Joseph Seligman & the "Hilton Affair"

A single and almost innocuous incident in 1877 has become in Jewish scholarship the focal point of virtually every analysis of American "anti-Semitism." The so-called Judge Hilton Affair is considered the most brazen case of anti-Semitism in the 19th century. It is worthy of review because it represents better than any other incident the galactic distance between the experiences of Blacks and Jews in America and the degrees of intolerance they both faced.

Joseph Seligman, Banker

Joseph Seligman was the most prominent Jew in the United States. He was born in Germany in 1819, and by the 1840s he and his brothers had immigrated to America and become merchants in the slave-based economy of Greensboro, Alabama. Seligman built his banking empire on the model of the Rothschild family, placing his brothers, cousins, and nephews in as many locations as he deemed necessary or profitable. He sold large quantities of U.S. bonds in Europe during the Civil War through this extended-family network, which was located in Frankfurt, Paris, and London. After the war J. & W.

Seligman & Company invested in railroads and other infrastructure enterprises and provided financial services to the United States government. Seligman was a friend of Lincoln's, a benefactor of Grant's, and an advisor of Hayes's, achieving a kind of celebrity in American culture.[158]

For ten years running, Seligman and his family, as well as many other Jewish families, vacationed in upstate New York at the fashionable Grand Union Hotel at Saratoga Springs owned by the magnate Henry Hilton. It was "the queen of American resorts"—the kind of place where guests brought their valets, maids, and butlers. But on one occasion in the summer of 1877, the Seligmans were allegedly told by the manager that Jews would no longer be admitted. The manager is said to have explained to Seligman that Mr. Hilton believed Jews were bad for business, necessitating the unfortunate change in policy.[159]

The incident, when publicized by Seligman, aroused international indignation among Jews and Gentiles alike, and notables like Mark Twain and Oliver Wendell Holmes denounced the apparent discrimination in the strongest of terms. The insult was considered so egregious that it has been deemed "the first major act of anti-Semitism in America."[160] The *New York Times* (before it was Jewish-owned) referred to it as the "Sensation at Saratoga." Professor of American Jewish History Jonathan Sarna, of Brandeis University, reflected the judgment of many Jewish scholars when he called the affair "shocking."[161]

Certainly, any act of anti-Semitism, including the snubbing of a Jewish millionaire at a whites-only resort hotel, is reprehensible. But those outraged by this act have overlooked the many acts of racial violence perpetrated against American

citizens in that same year of 1877, violence that by comparison might be characterized as far more egregious. It was a year so bloody in the annals of American history that it was deemed the "Year of Violence."[162] White ethnic gangs were so widespread that the word "hoodlum" entered the language in that year. Labor strikes turned deadly in several major American cities, and lynching was so common that it was seen by many as a legitimate part of the court system.[163] Other incidents in 1877 may well be considered at least as "shocking" as the Hilton affair:

- In August, the entire Black community of Campbellsburg, Kentucky, was forced to leave the state "under pain of death," leaving behind all their belongings, including their farm animals and unharvested crops, when whites discovered what they called a "criminal intimacy" between a white woman and a "young mulatto."[164]

- Also in August 1877, a Black man in Virginia was publicly whipped for the alleged crime of theft. Not satisfied, white authorities tried him again *on the same charge*, and sentenced him to 15 years in the penitentiary.[165]

- In September, Simon Garnett was shot by a white mob in a Cincinnati, Ohio, jail cell. When he didn't die, they returned the next day and shot him dead. Another Black man in the custody of sheriffs was murdered in

the same manner near Little Rock, Arkansas.[166]

- In 1877, thirty to forty thousand Blacks expressed their desire to leave America for the safety of Africa.[167]

- That same year, the government was pursuing its vicious campaign of extermination against the Native American and had targeted the Nez Perce, Lakota, Northern Cheyenne, Arapaho, and the Sioux nations for utter destruction.[168]

All who have written of the Seligman incident have never found these incidents worth a mention. Nor have they found it noteworthy that just a few months before Seligman's hotel rebuff, the government of the United States, *with significant Jewish participation*, sanctioned the so-called Compromise of 1877, which in principle and practice meant the end of legal rights for Blacks in America. The principal political figure in making this insidious agreement was the 19th president Rutherford B. Hayes, to whom Seligman served as friend and advisor.[169]

In 1877—and for nearly a century thereafter—Blacks were banned from patronizing American hotels from coast to coast. In fact, it would be another 40 years before the Saratoga hotel would bring in "Southern Negro women" as "help"—much less as guests.[170] And yet Seligman had been a satisfied customer in that segregated resort for years before the incident. What's more, Jewish-owned hotels across America refused admission to Blacks without hesitation, as a matter of policy and on the basis of skin color alone. Seligman easily found

alternative accommodations and Hilton suffered incalculable harm from the fallout of the affair as the world press rallied in support of the Jewish cause.[171]

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158 George S. Hellman, "Joseph Seligman, American Jew," *PAJHS* 41, no. 1 (Sept. 1951): 27-40; *JEncy* (1905), s.v. "Seligman." According to the *JEncy*, 11:168:

> In 1879 the Seligmans, with the Rothschilds, took over the whole of the $150,000,000 bonded loan of the United States. They have been financial agents for the Navy and the State Department of the United States since 1876, and are the accredited agents of that government both abroad and at home.

See also Barry Supple, "A Business Elite: German-Jewish Financiers in Nineteenth-Century New York," *Business History* 31 (1957): 177.

159 "A Sensation at Saratoga," *NYT*, 19 June 1877. The incident in Saratoga is described by many Jewish writers, including Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 213; Salo Wittmayer Baron, *Steeled By Adversity: Essays and Addresses on American Jewish Life,* ed. Jeannette Meisel Baron (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), 324; Isabel Boiko Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism: Negroes and Jews in New York, 1880 to World War II" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of New Mexico, 1973), 25-27; Charles E. Silberman, *A Certain People: American Jews and Their Lives Today* (New York: Summit Books, 1985), 47. See also Hellman, "Joseph Seligman, American Jew," 33-34, who writes that the alleged slight was "partly for personal reasons," they (Hilton and Seligman) having previously jousted in the political arena. Silberman, *A Certain People*, 47n. For elaboration on this, see Louise A. Mayo, *The Ambivalent Image* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated Univ. Presses, 1988), 94-95, 98; and "The Jews: The Exclusion of the New York Banker, Joseph Seligman, from the Grand Union Hotel," *Chicago Inter Ocean*, 20 June 1877, 2.

160 *Not the Work of a Day* (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1965), 7. The richest man in the world, Jewish international banker Mayer Carl Rothschild, wrote in 1875: "As for anti-semitic feeling the Jews themselves are to blame, and the present agitation must be ascribed to their arrogance, vanity and unspeakable insolence." See Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker, 1849-1999* (New York: Penguin, 1998), 271.

161 *NYT*, 19 June 1877. The *Times* was not Jewish-owned until 1896. Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A New History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2004), 133.

162 Robert V. Bruce, *1877: Year of Violence* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1959).

163 William Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1993), 7-8.

164 "Phases of Southern Life: A Kentucky Scandal," *NYT*, 12 Aug.

1877, 7. A "young Kentucky farmer named Asher" instigated the pogrom. ("Asher" is a Jewish name meaning "happiness" and is the name for one of the 12 tribes of Israel.) The *Times* reported that "Asher at once started a sort of crusade against [the 'mulatto'] and the other colored folks," and "rode down to the farms with about 100 armed and mounted men behind him, whose numbers rapidly increased as they proceeded from one farmhouse to another….The leader of the whole business appears to have been Asher." For more on this wholesale racial terrorism, see Elliot Jaspin, *Buried in Bitter Waters: The Hidden History of Racial Cleansing in America* (New York: Basic Books, 2007).

165 *NYT*, 11 Aug. 1877, 2.

166 *NYT*, 4 Sept. 1877, 5; 26 June 1877, 1.

167 "The Negro Exodus to Liberia," *NYT*, 15 July 1877, 2. In fact, between 1877 and 1880, tens of thousands of Blacks, citing violence and political and economic repression, migrated from the Mississippi Valley and Texas to Kansas.

168 *NYT*, 4 Aug. 1877, 3. The campaign was being led by none other than Gen. O.O. Howard, the man for whom Howard University was named. (General Custer had just been defeated at Little Big Horn in June of 1876.) For a discussion of a Jewish government official responsible for implementing the U.S. government's Indian policy, see Norton B. Stern, "Herman Bendell: Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Arizona Territory, 1871-1873," *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (April 1976): 265-82. Other references to Jewish–Indian relations are in "An Indian-Fighter, A Dance-Hall Girl, and a Sharpshooter: 3 Jews in the Old West," in *The Jewish Almanac*, eds. Richard Siegel and Carl Rheins (New York: Bantam, 1980), 53-55.

169 Silberman, *A Certain People*, 48. Also in 1877, New Hampshire modified its constitution to eliminate political discrimination against Jews. See Judah Gribetz, *The Timetables of Jewish History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 300.

170 Elliott M. Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1964), 64.

171 David J. Hellwig, "Black Images of Jews: From Reconstruction to Depression," *Societas* 8, no. 3 (summer 1978), 208: "Instead of meekly submitting, Jews had bought hotels in Saratoga and were thus able to enjoy local amenities despite gentile hostility." See reference to another example of Jews buying out "anti-Semitic" businesses, in ISJL, "Brunswick, Georgia." Also Dawidowicz, *On Equal Terms*, 40. See Deborah Dash Moore, *To the Golden Cities: Pursuing the American Jewish Dream in Miami and L.A.* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 167: "Most Jews…segregated their hotels and restaurants according to local custom."

Internecine Anti-Semitism

Beyond the inconvenience suffered by Mr. Seligman, the "anti-Semitism" that *can* be documented is that which the various Jewish subcommunities actually inflicted upon each other. All around America, German Jews—who had arrived in America generations before their brethren of Eastern Europe—thought the Jewish newcomers to be unkempt and uncivilized, pushy, brash, and vulgar. If the Seligman Affair is considered "shocking" by scholars, then this ugly internecine Jewish rivalry is undoubtedly the best example of "anti-Semitism" in the post–Civil War era. As Howard Sachar worded it: The Jews were "nurturing a full-blooded clannishness" that "swiftly emulated Gentile snobbery in every respect."[172]

In 1867, for instance, the Hebrew periodical *Ha Magid* reported that the 250 families that made up the Nashville Jewish community had broken into three factions, each building its own house of worship. "[T]hat which one planned to build," continued *Ha Magid*, "the others plotted to destroy."[173] Albert S. Lindemann wrote that the German and Eastern European Jews actually shunned each other, one group believing the other to be beneath their dignity. Even Emma Lazarus, whose words of welcome are inscribed on the Statue of Liberty—"Give me your tired, your poor, [y]our huddled masses yearning to breathe free"—preferred that immigrant Jews go elsewhere.[174] For the well-integrated German Jews

> were embarrassed by the gruff, uncouth, saggy-bearded, conspicuously un-Americanized, newcomers. These people, the German [Jews] felt, were loud,

pushy, aggressive.[175]

Drs. Dinnerstein and Palsson wrote that some Jews "regarded the mass migration of their East European coreligionists as a threat to their status in society."[176] Atlanta rabbi David Marx described the new immigrant Jews as "barbaric and ignorant," and they were discouraged from joining the Jewish fraternal order of B'nai B'rith as well as the synagogue. Rabbi Marx "bitterly blamed" them for creating a climate conducive to the arrest and lynching of the German Jew Leo Frank in 1913 and 1915 respectively—the only Jew ever lynched in American history.[177] In 1891, the Russian Jews had to ask the reluctant Germans for space in their cemetery to bury an infant; obviously, the two groups did not mix socially. Even mating between them was considered "intermarriage" and was forbidden. According to Mark Rosentraub and Delbert Taebel, "The German Jews even coined a word for their coreligionists, a word based on the fact that many Russian names end in 'ki.' The word was kikes."[178]

In Georgia, Jews "could not overcome the fences that one group of Jews established to differentiate themselves from their coreligionists." The B'nai B'rith report called the intolerance that existed between the Polish and German Jews "prejudice."[179] When the prominent North Carolinian Sam Wittkowsky was asked to contribute to the building of a synagogue, he replied that he would gladly contribute to a campaign *not* to build a synagogue[180]—a remark that would have elicited the undeniable charge of "anti-Semitism" had it been uttered by a Gentile.

Dr. April Blackburn maintains that German Jews often spoke out against their East European

coreligionists, "bemoaning their lack of 'Southern gentility' and customs and their desire to maintain traditional religious and communit[y] ties."[181] Charleston Jews became so inflamed that their intra-religious quarrels had to be referred to civil courts.[182] Louis Schmier wrote that the "alienation and antagonism among Jews themselves…in some cases was greater than that existing between Jews and gentiles."[183]

Even the South's Jewish country clubs discriminated on the basis of German and Russian/ Polish origin. The Jewish membership

> not only created its own "separate but equal" social facilities…but has also created a system of segregation within the Jewish group. In at least four Jewish country clubs…the by-laws permit a Gentile guest, but do not allow a member to bring a Jewish guest who is a resident of the area from which the club draws its membership.[184]

The president of B'nai B'rith in America was the eminent attorney Simon Wolf. In 1906 he wrote that "much has been said recently" about anti-Semitism in America, but he "failed to find it" to any great extent; instead, he added ominously: "There is more danger of anti-semitism *arising from our own ranks* than from any that may come from those of other faiths."[185]

But whether from within or without,[186] none of these tensions represented any physical threat to the Jews; nor did these occasional, mostly internecine, flare-ups interrupt the Jews' enjoyment of their full civil rights or disrupt their energetic pursuit of business and political opportunities. This

represents the crucial difference between the Black and Jewish experience in America. By all accounts, what little "anti-Semitism" there was did not hinder Jews from thriving in America, while anti-Black racism crippled the Black man in myriad proven, demonstrable, and permanent ways.

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172 Howard M. Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America* (New York: Knopf, 1992), 102.

173 Frank, "Nashville Jewry During the Civil War," 319.

174 Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 216, 218; Harry Golden, *The Greatest Jewish City in the World* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972), 30. According to Peter Grose, this idea—*held by German-American Jews*—that immigrant Jews go elsewhere prompted the creation of Israel in Palestine. See his book *Israel in the Mind of America* (New York: Knopf, 1983), 32.

175 Mark Rosentraub and Delbert Taebel, "Jewish Enterprise in Transition: From Collective Self-Help to Orthodox Capitalism," in *Self-Help in Urban America: Patterns of Minority Economic Development*, ed. Scott Cummings (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1980), 196. Efforts were made by German Jews to thwart the immigration of Eastern European Jews. See Zosa Szajkowski, "The Attitude of American Jews to East-European Jewish Immigration, 1881-1893," *PAJHS* 40 (March 1951): esp. 222-35. See also "A Colony in Kansas—1882," *AJA* 17, no. 2 (Nov. 1965): 114-15.

176 Dinnerstein and Palsson, *Jews in the South*, 7. "Mobile, Alabama's Oldest Jewish Community," *Circa* 11, no. 3 (fall 2002), 11: "As was true in many other cities in America, ethnic, cultural, religious, and class differences divided the 'German' from the 'Russian' Jews of Mobile."

177 Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 230-31; Arnold Shankman, "Atlanta Jewry—1900–1930," *AJA* 25, no. 2 (Nov. 1973): 132-33, 145; Deborah R. Weiner, "The Jews of Clarksburg: Community Adaptation and Survival, 1900-60," *West Virginia History Journal* 54 (1995): 59-77. Leo Frank was Atlanta's B'nai B'rith president who was convicted of the murder of a 13-year-old Gentile girl.

178 Rosentraub and Taebel, "Jewish Enterprise in Transition," 196; Hollace Ava Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas: Rabbis and Their Work* (College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 1999), 87. The rabbi of Bloomington, Illinois, was rebuffed by the lay leader of his congregation when he suggested that a certain Jew be asked to join. "We don't want any *kikes* in our congregation," the lay leader explained. See also Zweigenhaft, "The Jews of Greensboro," 69-70; Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses*, 12. Louis Rubin wrote that he learned as a child in Charleston that he was "no kike with thick lips and a hook nose; I was a member of one of the Fine Old Jewish Families." See Hero, *The Southerner and World Affairs,* 488 n. 18. See also "As to the Origin of the Word 'Kyke,'" *American Israelite*, 27 Aug. 1914, 4.

179 Greenberg, “Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity,” 11, 228.

180 Morris Speizman, *The Jews of Charlotte, North Carolina: A Chronicle with Commentary and Conjectures* (Charlotte: McNally & Loftin, 1978), 8.

181 Blackburn, “‘In the Midst of the Whirl,’” 46.

182 David Philipson, *The Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), 467.

183 Louis E. Schmier, “Jewish Religious Life,” *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1989), 1291.

184 Golden, “Jew and Gentile in the New South,” 410-11. Needless to say, Blacks were not welcome as members at these Jewish country clubs.

185 Emphasis ours. Simon Wolf, “The Jew as a Factor in the Development of the United States,” *Menorah* 40 (1906).

186 See Wyszkowski, *A Community in Conflict*, 222-23. This is not to say that individual Jews were not victims of violence; just that the religion of the victim was not a factor.

Tailoring Judaism to Fit Jim Crow

For centuries, the Jews of Europe had steadfastly maintained their fidelity to the Mosaic Law; their holy book of rabbinical wisdom, the Talmud; and the Judaic culture. But in the American South, Jews actually redesigned Judaism to better fit in with the peculiarly racist environment they encountered. They accomplished this feat by systematically throwing out nearly all of the centuries-old religious and cultural rituals and emphasizing their common *white* racial heritage with other Europeans. This Southern-style Judaism, with its unqualified belief in white racial supremacy, became the glue that bound Jews to their Gentile neighbors.

The South provided a particularly ideal environment for this historic transformation. Southerners were reared in a strict Christian fundamentalism that cast Jews in a Biblical role as "God's ministers," and this view of the Jews fit in nicely with their own religious self-perceptions.[187] True Southerners believed that the Confederacy was no less than a sacred cause, and they found confirmation of this in the scriptures of the Old Testament. In their view, just as the Biblical Israelites were persecuted by Pharaoh, the white South was victimized and oppressed by Lincoln's Yankee North; thus, white Southerners identified fully with the plight of the "Chosen People of God," whose Judaic traditions resonated profoundly.[188]

This shared imagery was far more sustainable than the more recent European narrative of perennial conflict. It gave the white South the divine identity it desperately needed to sanctify its brutal racism, and it gave the evangelicals a triumphant and redemptive Biblical analogy in the

wake of their utter military defeat. Central to this belief system was the adoration and even the deification of their Southern Jewish neighbors, manifested in the Christian competition to welcome and honor the "People of the Book." And Jews themselves reciprocated this goodwill and validated these ideas by transforming their cherished and ancient rituals to celebrate this new age of Jewish–Gentile harmony.[189]

When one considers the long European tradition of violent intergroup animosity, their reconciliation is even more remarkable. Dr. Israel Shahak, a Jewish Holocaust survivor, wrote of the Old Country Jewish behaviors that served to "inculcate hatred and scorn for all Gentiles." One rule required that "a pious Jew must utter [a] curse" when passing near a Gentile cemetery or when seeing a large Gentile population. Shahak says that the Talmud—the rabbinical teachings of European Judaism—requires that a Jew who passes near an inhabited Gentile dwelling "must ask God to destroy it, whereas if the building is in ruins he must thank the Lord of Vengeance." It became customary, says Shahak, "to spit (usually three times) upon seeing a church or a crucifix" and "sometimes insulting biblical verses were also added." Gentiles had similar retaliatory customs of their own and felt just as aggrieved, victimized, and oppressed in that ancient dysfunctional relationship. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* admits that Gentiles were once targeted for "extermination" by the Biblical Jews. Talmudic scholar Jacob Neusner candidly states that in the Talmud "gentiles are assumed routinely to practice bestiality, bloodshed, and murder."[190]

These are not the kinds of ethno-religious animosities that one expects could evaporate over the course of a simple boat ride. But in the

American South, that is exactly what appears to have happened. “Fast friendships were formed”[191] and some newcomers, like this Jewish peddler serving the planters in the South, were entirely overwhelmed at the sea change in Christian–Jewish relations:

> The gratitude displayed by the farmers in the forms of hospitality and a respect for Jewish ways kept [him] in a state of perpetual shock. He never expected a Gentile to offer a Jew a chair at the dinner table.[192]

Formerly contentious Biblical conflicts between Jew and Gentile were actually reframed to reinforce the common goal of white supremacy. The 1859 speech of arch-secessionist R. B. Rhett shows how *the extermination of Gentiles by Jews* in ancient times was simply turned on its head to serve a greater *Southern* purpose:

> The Caucasian race is not only to be the masters but the spiritual pastors of the world. *As the Jews extirpated the heathen nations around them* by God’s command, so the weaker races may be destined to perish or to fall beneath the subjection and tutelage of the superior races of the world.[193]

Jewish Southerners made adaptations to long-standing Jewish traditions and practices that would have horrified even the most secularized Jews of Europe. A high proportion of Southern Jews dated and intermarried with their age-old enemy, the Gentiles;[194] non-Jews were allowed to be buried in the synagogue’s cemetery; and Jewish dietary laws

were jettisoned in favor of Southern cuisine—despite its concentration on pork and other forbidden ingredients. Kosher laws forbade the consumption of shellfish, but in 1878 the *Jewish South* newspaper reported a wedding dinner featuring an oyster-eating race, "as if it were a usual occurrence." For the most part, "the community apparently did not even consider keeping kosher."[195] The very identity of a Jew—as determined by the faith of the mother—was even changed such that a Jew could be considered eligible for temple membership if solely his father were Jewish. There even developed among some Jewish parents the sentiment that the *Southernness* of their children's chosen mates was more important to them than their Jewishness.[196]

These American-styled renovations were accomplished without much resistance. Jewish immigrants seemed ready to shed the rigidity of traditional Jewish life in the European *shtetls*. Rabbi and scholar Bertram W. Korn lamented that even though "there were Jews in colonial Louisiana, there was no Judaism."[197] Elliott Ashkenazi, without much alarm, adds, "The rituals associated with the religious practice of Judaism must not have been very important to them."[198] In fact, Carolyn Lipson-Walker locates these new Southern behaviors outside Judaism altogether: "The style of Southern Jewish everyday life is upper-middle class White, Southern Christian."[199]

And because of this laissez-faire attitude, the formation of traditionally Jewish communities—with the establishment of religious institutions such as synagogues, schools, and cemeteries—was unusually slow in the South. When Jews arrived in Louisiana, for example, "little attention was paid to the establishment of congregations in the state," as

most found the pursuit of the boundless economic opportunities of the slave-based economy to be more enticing. According to Ashkenazi, "The immigrants appeared too concerned with making a living to worry about synagogues."[200]

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187 See Joseph L. Morrison, "A Southern Philo-Semite: Josephus Daniels of North Carolina," *Judaism* 12, no. 1 (winter 1963): 79; Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 39.

188 Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates,* 333, 33; Leonard Rogoff, *Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2001), 86. A noted preacher justified the slaughter of the Native American using the "chosen people" motif. See Scott Langston, "Interaction and Identity: Jews and Christians in Nineteenth Century New Orleans," *SJH* 3 (Oct. 2000): 89.

189 Eliza R.L. McGraw, *Two Covenants: Representations of Southern Jewishness* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2005), 82, 94, 97; Lee Shai Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-Town America: A History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2005), 273; Hero, *The Southerner and World Affairs*, 495; Kenneth Hoffman, "The Jews of Natchez," unpublished paper, 1993, Historic Natchez Foundation, 11. This ideological intimacy between Jews and Gentiles is reflected most explicitly in the writings of the South's most ardent exponent of its racist culture, the Rev. Thomas Dixon, author of *The Clansman*, a novel that inspired the profoundly racist film *Birth of a Nation*.

190 Israel Shahak, *Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years* (Boulder, CO: Pluto Press, 1994), 93; *JEncy* (1910), s.v. "Gentile," which cites the Bible: Deuteronomy 7:1-6, 18:9-14, 20:16-18; Joshua 13:1-6. See especially chap. 5, "The Laws Against Non-Jews," in Shahak, *Jewish History, Jewish Religion*, 75-98; *The Talmud of Babylonia: An American Translation*, vol. 25a, *Tractate Abode Zarah*, trans. Jacob Neusner (Providence: Brown Univ., 1991), 101–9; Berakoth 58b in *The Babylonian Talmud,* pt. 1, *Zera'im* (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 363. Also, Emily Taitz, *The Jews of Medieval France: The Community of Champagne* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 58-59.

191 There is evidence that Jews brought some of their anti-Gentile bigotry with them when they settled in America. A peddler named Abraham Kohn spoke with disdain of Gentiles in Massachusetts in 1842: "They often go to Church here, but only to show the neighbor's wife a new veil or dress." See Lee M. Friedman, "The Problems of Nineteenth Century American Jewish Peddlers," *PAJHS* 44 (1954-1955): 2. Another Jewish peddler, Henry Burgance, died in Woodville, Mississippi, in 1849, and "loath to have their companion buried with Christians," his Jewish friends bought a small piece of land for $50 and founded a cemetery. *JEncy* (1910), s.v. "Mississippi"; Dawidowicz, *On Equal Terms*, 42-43.

192 Louis Schmier, "'For Him the "Schwartzers" Couldn't Do

Enough': A Jewish Peddler and His Black Customers Look at Each Other," in *Strangers and Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks and Jews in the United States,* eds. Maurianne Adams and John Bracey (Amherst, MA: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 227. Originally published in *AJH* 73, no. 1 (1983): 39-55. Also, Zola, "Why Study Southern Jewish History?" 11; Burton Alan Boxerman, "The Edison Brothers, Shoe Merchants: Their Georgia Years," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 57, no. 4 (winter 1973): 524.

193 Robert Barnwell Rhett, speech delivered at Grahamville, S.C., 4 July 1859, quoted in *Charleston Mercury*, 7 July 1859, 1.

194 Benjamin Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger: A Study of Jewish Life in the Small Community* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), 85; Reilly, "Religious Leaders and Social Criticism in New Orleans," 274; Leonard Rogoff, "Is the Jew White? The Racial Place of the Southern Jew," *AJH* 85, no. 3 (1997): 202.

195 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 113-14. Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 388, concluded: "Most Southern Jews were willing to sacrifice a great deal that was fundamental in Judaism in order to gain acceptance as Southerners. They abandoned many of the basic elements of Judaism." See Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 3 n. 5; Sanford Ragins, "The Image of America in Two East European Hebrew Periodicals," *AJA* 17, no. 2 (Nov. 1965): 145. In early 1900s Beaumont, the local chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women sold ham salad sandwiches as a synagogue fund-raiser. See Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas*, 27. As late as 1957 a publication of the Tupelo, Mississippi, synagogue carried an advertisement for "Prairie Belt Bacon." "From the Archives: Building a Synagogue in Tupelo," *Circa* 17, no. 1 (winter 2008): 8. Also, there are examples of Jewish individuals who were devout observers of strict kosher diets and the Jewish Sabbath. See Amy Godine, "Peddling Tales," *Moment Magazine*, 2001, http://www.momenmag.com/archive/feb00/olam2.html; Ruth Scheinberg, "The Pekl: Folk Histories of Jewish Peddlers in the South, 1890-1914" (1980), 36, 40, 44, Old South Miscellany, MSS 49, Box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

196 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all,'" 54-55. In 1852, Charleston's synagogue held a confirmation ceremony, a ritual it had borrowed from Christianity. ISJL, "Charleston, South Carolina."

197 Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 10. LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 97: "…the synagogue in the early days was almost ancillary to the importance of establishing economic progress."

198 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 271.

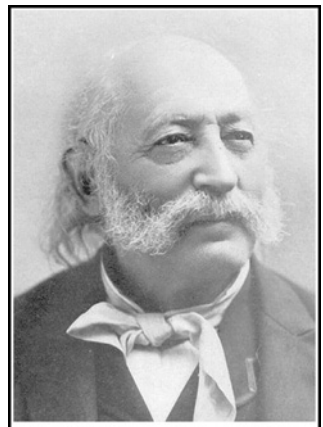
199 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all,'" 57.

200 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 256, 260, 270, 272-73.

The Racial Wisdom of Rabbi Wise

[Jesus was] as near lunacy as was Caligula when he proclaimed himself the highest god. The idea is so absurd, so inexpressibly stupid and blasphemous, that one must lose his reason first before he can think it.

—Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, founder of Reform Judaism



Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise

When they did convene to observe their faith, writes Dr. Leah Hagedorn, Jews attempted to make their individual and collective religious behaviors "appear as similar to Protestant practice as possible," the Jews believing that "a public affirmation of faith would 'elevate' them in the eyes of the Gentiles."[201] Ultimately, this extraordinary religious revisionism became known as Reform Judaism and formed the branch of Judaism that is today practiced by most American Jews. Its leader and founder, the Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise (1819–1900), is as central to this movement as the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is to Black Christianity and the Civil Rights Movement.

In 1875, Rabbi Wise founded the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, a theological school that for a long time was the only seminary for the training of rabbis in America. It gave Wise the power to impress his Judaic vision upon generations of American rabbis. Unfortunately for American Blacks, his racial ideology was purely Southern,[202] staunchly pro-slavery, and boldly white supremacist.

Rabbi Wise viewed Blacks not as victims of an unjust international flesh trade, but as subhumans "representing all that is debased and inferior in the hopeless barbarity and heathenism of six thousand years." As publisher of *The Israelite*, "the world's largest Jewish newspaper," he argued for the maintenance of Black African slavery, reasoning that "The Negro was never free; and his bondage in Africa was simply duplicated in a milder form when he was imported here." He detested the abolitionists, calling them "demagogues" and "demons of hatred and destruction" who "know of no limits to their fanaticism."[203] In fact, according to Dr. Harold Brackman, abolitionism "in Wise's mind…was *the major threat* to Jewish existence in mid-nineteenth century America."[204] Sounding very much like a Ku Kluxer, the renowned rabbi opined:

> All mongrel races in which the blood of either the two or three races is mixed, experience teaches and science has established, degenerate and disappear in the course of time.[205]

Rabbi Wise apportioned human value on the basis of skin color and advocated laws and policies that reflected this racism. He posed Europeans and Blacks as inherently opposite and challenged government immigration policies that did not make such a distinction. "Do you think the Israelites of the South must be your white slaves," he angrily asked, "as you in your naturalization laws treat the foreigner, placing him below the negro?"[206]

When he thought abolitionists were not properly outraged at General Grant's 1862 order banishing Jewish merchants thought to be smuggling supplies to the enemy,[207] Wise brusquely reminded them of their debt to Judaism:

> [I]f so many Negroes had been injured as were Hebrews [by General Grant]...you would have cried as loudly as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah; but for the white Hebrew who gave you a God and a religion, you had not a word to say.[208]

He condemned Presbyterian leaders as "hypocrites" who "embrace the distant negro [*sic*] and rebuke the distant slaveholder."[209] Rabbi Korn recounted an incident of Wise's rage against the Black man:

> In June, 1867, Wise visited Richmond and was bitter in his reaction to the results of the war, whereby the negroes seemed destined to assume control of the entire Southland. He wrote of the negroes roaming the streets at will, while the whites remained in their homes. Undoubtedly he was absorbing the propaganda line of the defeated Confederates when he predicted that the whites would eventually be forced to leave the South; then the negroes would be in full command and would stimulate a flood of negro immigration from Africa.[210]

For over half a century Rabbi Wise exerted "an immense influence on the pivotal religious and institutional issues of American Jewish life."[211] He preserved, renovated, and amplified the age-old Talmudic anti-African canards,[212] even declaring that the Black man was "a separately-created species."[213] From his rabbinical perch in Cincinnati just outside the northern boundary of the Confederacy, Rabbi Wise aggressively promoted this

racialistic version of Judaism to some of the most notable Jewish clerics in American history. Southern rabbis such as Max Heller, Morris Newfield, Isidore Lewinthal, Max Raisin, David Marx, and Moses Jacobson—all of whom served in the heart of Jim Crow rule—were trained by Wise.[214]

In 1884, the examinations for degrees from Wise's Hebrew Union College were administered by Rabbi James K. Gutheim of New Orleans—the very same man who prayed to God for the success of the Confederate slaveholders, and who famously fled his beloved city rather than sign an oath of loyalty to Lincoln's "unrighteous invaders." When racial desegregation of the New Orleans school system was proposed, Gutheim founded a Hebrew school in protest.[215]

Certainly, this newly minted race-based Judaism facilitated the transition from a European legacy of animosity to a new American tradition of cooperation in order to accomplish a common goal —the formation of a society based on a mutually beneficial white supremacy. Jews did not hide one to practice the other: their Judaism—as they understood it—perfectly reinforced, buttressed, and coincided with white supremacy.[216]

Dr. Clive Webb was clear about this when he wrote, "[O]f all the accusations leveled against Jews, one in particular threatened their social stability. That accusation was that Jews were not white."[217] Professor Hagedorn explains the racial motivation for the Judaic modifications:

> When Southern Jews sought rabbis they did so with the purpose of having someone to explain Judaism to Gentiles, believing that would enable them to

> *claim the status of a white religion* rather than being relegated to a position as a racial other.[218]

Rabbi Wise's Reform Judaism, with its distinctly Dixie imprint, was manifested in many ways in the lives of Southern Jews, who, by and large, made their living in retail and wholesale business.[219] The community of Christians, enriched by the slave system, patronized Jewish merchants, providing them with lucrative benefits, which in turn allowed them to subsidize their clergy. For example, Rabbi Morris Newfield, leader of Birmingham, Alabama, Jews from 1895–1940, became a rabbinical agent for Jewish business interests.[220] He altered his worship services "to correspond to the wishes of his congregants made largely of retailers and businessmen." They needed "an envoy" to the Christian community to "'play up' the religious connection of the Jews to ancient biblical times, an image that played so well for them in the bible belt." According to his biographer, "Newfield complied."[221]

Even Chanukah, the eight-day-long Jewish holiday ending a few days before Christmas, was *rescheduled* to fit Jewish business interests. Jews were said to "profit from the Christmas frenzy," despite it being the birth celebration of the Christian Saviour. In some cases Jews celebrated Chanukah around a Christmas tree on Christmas day just to make it "convenient for the busy retail merchants."[222]

In New Orleans, the local congregation came under the control of the "intermarried Jewish business community."[223] Rabbi David Marx led the wealthy and assimilated Atlanta congregation and was said to have "shed rabbinical garb in favor of a

business suit." He forbade the singing of traditional Jewish songs; he repudiated Zionism and the idea of a Jewish state; he altered wedding ceremonies to exclude wine and other traditional trappings; and he openly criticized those Jews who practiced the traditional ways, even suggesting that Orthodox Jews were the cause of whatever "anti-Semitism" may have existed.[224]

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201 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 115; Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," 77: "…Jews made cultural and religious adaption a virtual article of faith…" Also, Rogoff, *Homelands*, 70, 312.

202 Barkai, *Branching Out*, 119.

203 Bertram W. Korn, *Eventful Years and Experiences* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1954), 131, 132; James G. Heller, *Isaac M. Wise: His Life and Work and Thought* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1965), 340; Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 318.

204 Emphasis ours. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 293.

205 Andrew F. Key, *The Theology of Isaac Mayer Wise,* Monographs of the American Jewish Archives, ed. Jacob Rader Marcus, no. 5 (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1962), 52. Wise was no less disdainful of the Asians and Native Americans. See *The Western Journal of Isaac Mayer Wise, 1877,* ed. William M. Kramer (Berkeley, CA: Western Jewish History Center, 1974), 20-21, 29.

206 Korn, *Eventful Years and Experiences*, 132; Charles M. Segal, *Fascinating Facts About American Jewish History* (New York: Twayne, 1955), 85.

207 See *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, 1:161-68. For an example see "The War in the Southwest," *NYT*, 22 Nov. 1863, 1. Hertzberg, *The Jews in America*, 131-32: "Jews were involved. In 1862, their participation in smuggling led to the issuance of an order by Ulysses S. Grant…" Barkai, *Branching Out,* 115. Of their involvement in smuggling Barkai writes, "There is no reason to believe that Jewish businessmen…were more squeamish than their Gentile competitors and missed their chance." ISJL, "Wilmington, North Carolina" is even more explicit:

> Wilmington became a major base for Confederate blockade running against the Union embargo. Jewish merchants and agents converged on the city to help the Confederate effort.…J.M. Seixas, a Charleston Jew, was sent to Wilmington by the Confederate War Department to find blockade runners [to] keep the southern supply line moving. Solomon Haas and Simon Bear went to Europe to purchase needed goods for the Confederacy… E. Solomon and Co. shipped a large amount of tobacco to

> Europe and imported manufacturing goods. Jonas Levy ran ships between Wilmington and Europe after petitioning Judah P. Benjamin, the Confederate Cabinet Official, for the right.

As a result of these activities Jews were charged with avoiding military service in order to profit from this smuggling. "Such charges were patently untrue," the ISJL defensively wrote in 2006, and then it provided the names of three Jews who "fought for the Confederacy." That it is defending Jewry by pointing out how they helped keep Blacks in chattel slavery is an example of the extreme moral disconnection of many Jewish historians. The ISJL further reveals that the Jews of Wilmington responded to the "anti-Semitism" by becoming more aggressively racist: "Wilmington Jews made a concerted effort to embrace the heritage of the Confederacy."

208 Korn, *Eventful Years and Experiences*, 133.

209 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 22. Dr. Harold Brackman wrote that "Wise was no different from another racist Reform rabbi, James K. Gutheim," who in 1862 urged fellow Southern Jews to support the Confederacy. See Brackman's "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 292-93; Kenneth Libo, "The Moseses of Montgomery: The Saga of a Jewish Family in the South," *Alabama Heritage*, Spring 1995, 20.

210 Korn, E*ventful Years and Experiences*, 150.

211 Barkai, *Branching Out*, 89.

212 For Talmudic racism see Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 80-83. See especially Abraham Melamed, *The Image of the Black in Jewish Culture: A History of the Other* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

213 Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 292-93.

214 Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl,'" 5; Schmier, "Jewish Religious Life," 1290.

215 *NYT*, 30 June 1884, 5; Scott M. Langston, "James K. Gutheim as Southern Reform Rabbi, Community Leader, and Symbol," *SJH* 5 (2002): 77-80; Langston, "Interaction and Identity," 92-93.

216 Emory University professor Dr. Eric L. Goldstein wrote that "American Jews became preoccupied with the need to craft a social identity and a definition of Jewishness that would not interfere with their acceptance as white." See his article "The Unstable Other," 409.

217 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 133.

218 Emphasis ours. Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 170, and 141. According to Marilyn Kay Cheatham Goldman, "The social conditions which promoted the use of race in defining Jewishness in America did not emerge until the 1870s"—those "social conditions" being Black Emancipation and Reconstruction. See her "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 65 n. 8.

219 Gary Phillip Zola, "The Ascendancy of Reform Judaism in the American South During the Nineteenth Century," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 156-91 and passim, esp. 177-81; Jennifer A. Stollman, "Jewish Religious Life," *New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture,* vol. 1 (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2006), 81-85; Mark K. Bauman and Bobbie Malone, "Introduction: Directions in Southern

Jewish History 2," *AJH* 85, no. 4 (Dec. 1997), 351.

220 Cowett, "Rabbi Morris Newfield," 52.

221 Harry Golden reinforced this point when he wrote that the small-town Southerner "takes it for granted…that his friend the storekeeper fully possesses that Hebraic tradition handed down through the centuries for which the Southern Christian has so deep a respect." See Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South," 405. Also Cowett, "Rabbi Morris Newfield," 54, 59. Rabbi Newfield was characterized as an "apologist for business interests" and was considered anti-labor. He claimed that workers who complained were guilty of "idleness, intemperance [and] improvidence." Ibid., 69.

222 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all,'" 277-79.

223 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 270.

224 Steve Oney, *And the Dead Shall Rise: The Murder of Mary Phagan and the Lynching of Leo Frank* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003), 12, 607-8; Zola, "The Ascendancy of Reform Judaism," 180.

The Union of Church, Synagogue, & State in Jim Crow

The cures which [Jesus] performed appeared miraculous to the vulgar, impious to the religious, and ridiculous to the intelligent. While they were aggrandized by the believers, they proved repulsive to the sober and reflecting minds.

—Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, founder of Reform Judaism

The harmonious relations between the Southern church and the Southern synagogue defy the common wisdom. This was not just tolerance and cordiality—this was true devotional integration, the extent of which would have been beyond the earthly comprehension of the sages of European Jewry. According to Dr. Marilyn Goldman, Christians welcomed Jews into the dominant

society and "willingly joined with Jews in social settings, and Jews did not wall out Christians…*Jews changed their religion* to make acceptance possible."[225] The Mobile, Alabama, synagogue boasted in its literature that "Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Jews worshipp[ed] together, as further evidence of cordial and friendly relations between Jews and non-Jews of our city."[226] Solomon Jones was an official in the Temple but his wife and daughter were members of St. John's Episcopal Church, listed there as "Jewish."[227] Jews attended the First Presbyterian Church in Holly Springs, Mississippi.[228] Some Wilmington, North Carolina, Jews subscribed to pews in the local Episcopal church while retaining membership in the synagogue, and the state's governor and bishop donated to the building of Durham's Beth El synagogue.[229]

Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger of Houston's Congregation Beth Israel held Friday evening services that were well attended by both Jews and Gentiles. At one point, the Jewish congregation in Houston worshipped in the First Methodist Church, the same church where the Ku Klux Klan's grand dragon worshipped. In Brenham, Texas, in 1879, "Jewish children regularly attend[ed] Christian Sunday school," where they received "instruction that Jesus is the Savior of all mankind." Dallas rabbi George Kohut praised the "glorious teachings of Jesus of Nazareth" and said Jews accepted Christ's teachings and acknowledged him as the "world's most inspired prophet."[230] In Austin, the mayor lent his office for the Jews' use when they organized their synagogue in 1874.[231]

When Orthodox Jews in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, established their own synagogue, they received support from several Christian denominations,

which supplied additional land, furniture, and even the velvet for their sacred ark covering.[232] Rabbi Nachman Benson of Camden, Arkansas, drew many Gentiles to his services, and the local Christian congregations worshipped at his synagogue when their own facilities were being constructed.[233]

Natchez, Mississippi, Jews enjoyed an extensive network of Christian friendships. When their temple was under construction in 1871, the Baptist congregation offered its church for use for Jewish services. In 1899, 76-year-old Ricka Tillman was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Natchez. She was so closely associated with the local non-Jews that the local pastor found that "it was hard not to regard her as a Christian." Invited by the rabbi to deliver the eulogy, he said she was "so clearly not 'against Christ' that [she] may characteristically be classed with those who are 'for him.'"[234] When the Natchez, Mississippi, temple burned in 1903, the Methodists, Baptists, and Episcopalians offered their buildings.[235] The "welcome and hospitable environment" of Lexington, Mississippi, made the town "an exceptional place" for Jewish settlement.[236]

For the Charlotte, North Carolina, congregation *Shaaray Israel* (Doors of Israel), Christian workers performed "a very much appreciated gesture of true interfaith benevolence and cooperation." They were dismantling the local post office and brought the salvaged wood and paneling over to the synagogue and installed it free of charge "as our contribution to your new House of Worship." One Jew in New Iberia, Louisiana, contributed $500 toward the construction of a Catholic church in 1888, and the favor was returned when the Jews built a temple a decade later.[237] When twenty Jewish families in Orangeburg, South Carolina, announced that they

would build a temple, a self-appointed "Christian Committee" immediately presented pledges of $6,000.[238] South Florida Jewish merchant Philip Dzialynski served on the building committee of the local Methodist church.[239] The *Atlanta Constitution* reported that the leading Jewish merchant of Rome, Georgia, "turned over his business to a committee to be run in the interest of building a Christian church" and that the wives and daughters of the town's Jewish merchants "are taking as big a hand as anybody," raising $1,500 for the church project.[240] The wealthy slave-holding merchant Judah Touro, of New Orleans, bequeathed two thousand dollars to the city's Christians to build a church.[241]

Again, Hebrew University professor Israel Shahak comments on the Talmudic traditions of European Jews that make this commingling[242] of Christians and Jews in the South historically astonishing:

> [I]n addition to a series of scurrilous sexual allegations against Jesus, the Talmud states that his punishment in hell is to be immersed in boiling excrement… [and] Jews are instructed to burn, publicly if possible, any copy of the New Testament that comes into their hands.[243]

And there are many examples of mass Gentile violence against the Jews in Europe;[244] however, none of the violent contempt between these legendary combatants is documented in the American South. What's more, governments—the perpetrators of state-sponsored anti-Jewish violence in Europe—were, in the South, just as hospitable to the Jews as was the Christian church. Houston's Beth Israel Congregation held a parade in 1870 on

the city's main street, accompanied by marshals on horseback leading the mayor, the aldermen, police officers, a brass band, fire companies, Jewish fraternal organizations, and a number of Masonic groups to the site where the stone for the new synagogue was to be laid. At Nashville's cornerstone ceremony, both former President Andrew Johnson and Governor John C. Brown addressed those gathered for the occasion. Other Southern cities like Atlanta, Birmingham, and Petersburg held ceremonies "almost as spectacular, and in at least two of these a Protestant minister delivered the opening prayer, or actually laid the stone." Four hundred citizens, "including the elite of the city," attended the Little Rock, Arkansas, synagogue dedication in 1872. Jews often used *Purim*, a festive minor holiday, "as an excuse to celebrate or socialize on a grand scale."[245]

According to Dr. Leah Hagedorn, Jews bought land for cemeteries, established religious schools, conducted religious services, and held community fairs "to display religiosity." They erected buildings, she says, "mostly for Gentiles." Their temples were more than places to pray—they were "an attempt at religious parity." They altered the traditional synagogue architecture to represent designs "that would be familiar to—and almost identical to those of—Protestants." Hagedorn portrays the Jews as nearly desperate for acceptance so that they might transform "the profane—commerce—into the sacred," in the eyes of their Gentile customer base. Their aim, she asserts, was to "soften Southern ideas of Jews as economic entities."[246]

To further express their religiosity and to broadcast their intention to root themselves in the communities they served, Jews built "palatial and impressive edifices" all throughout the South. In

1896, New Orleans Jews built “a marble fortress” to serve as their social gathering center, which they ecumenically called the Harmony Club. St. Louis had its own Harmonie Club with a “graceful wide staircase” and a “fine ballroom.”[247] In 1909, Birmingham Jews constructed a city-block-sized enclave for the Phoenix Club. In 1910, Nashville Jews completed a suburban retreat they called the Standard Country Golf Club. The Jews of Atlanta in 1905 established their own elite enclave, also called the Standard Club, and in 1912 bought a mansion on the best residential street in the city.[248] All these events are unremarkable with respect to the historical record, but astounding to those who are fully invested in the idea that Jews were unwelcome in the Jim Crow South—the home of the Ku Klux Klan, lynchings, and legendary anti-Black bigotry.

Jews made white Americanization “a cardinal principle in their communal policy.”[249] Dr. April Blackburn adds that “‘Southernness’ has played a primary role in the development of Jewish life” and found that “Jews were not markedly different from their Southern neighbors in their acceptance of slavery and other Southern values.”[250]

Jewish historian Dr. Kenneth Libo concludes that “acculturation and assimilation of Jews in the South occurred far more rapidly than in the North” and that the use of the Bible by both Jews and Gentiles to defend slavery “helped mollify religious differences.”[251] The dean of American Jewish scholars, Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, is more to the point: “[Jews] have participated in virtually every aspect of life and struggles of the Southern region. They were active as plantation owners… businessmen…soldiers… and statesmen.”[252] Avraham Barkai concedes that “most [Jews]

willingly embraced Southern attitudes..."[253] As Dr. Steven Hertzberg stated,

> Slavery was the pillar of antebellum southern civilization, and the region was more likely to attract individual immigrants who had no strong objections to the "peculiar institution" and were willing to adapt themselves to the prevailing orthodoxy.[254]

Furthermore, Jews did their part to maintain the color line so that their whiteness would not be suspect. According to Hagedorn, "Most Southern Jews did everything they could to distance themselves from visible difference." Russian Jewish immigrant Abraham Bisno is one example of this tendency. He came to Atlanta as a teenager in 1881 and soon found employment in a Chattanooga, Tennessee, Jewish tailor shop:

> There was a Negro hired girl working for the tailor and since the atmosphere was antagonistic to Negroes, I think I excelled more than any other member of the family with meanness and contempt.[255]

Dr. Hagedorn makes an alarming assessment of the Jewish role in Southern society, one that is rarely admitted in print:

> [A]ntebellum Southern Jews strongly believed that their whiteness offered them a secure place in a society centered around the enslavement of Africans.[256]

Armed with this new Southernized Judaism, Jews were unmistakably white and enjoyed the full

benefits of America's rigid racial caste system. Whereas Europe had become a perennial battleground of interethnic and interreligious warfare, the South represented—for Jews and white Gentiles alike—a harmony of interests that is unparalleled in Jewish history.

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225 Emphasis ours. Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 234-35. Also, Besmann, *A Separate Circle*, 139.

226 *The First 100 Years of Kahl Montgomery* (Montgomery, 1952), 16-17.

227 Bertram Wallace Korn, "The Jews of Mobile, Alabama, Prior to the Organization of the First Congregation, in 1841," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, vols. 40-41 (1969-70): 485. Two Jewish citizens of Columbia, South Carolina, "extended the hand of good fellowship to their non-Jewish neighbors by presenting toasts at the anniversary dinner of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society." Helen Kohn Hennig, *The Tree of Life: Fifty Years of Congregational Life at the Tree of Life Synagogue, Columbia, S.C.* (Columbia: Tree of Life Congregation, 1945), 2.

228 ISJL, "Holly Springs, Mississippi."

229 Leonard Rogoff, "Synagogue and Jewish Church: A Congregational History of North Carolina," *SJH* 1 (1998): 50; Rogoff, *Down Home*, 34ff, 169ff.

230 Stone, "West of Center," 111-12; Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas*, 193; Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 110, 246.

231 Jay Lawrence Silberberger, "The First One Hundred Years: A History of the Austin Jewish Community, 1850-1950" (senior honors thesis, Univ. of Texas at Austin, 1974), 19.

232 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 79.

233 "Digital Archive Expands to Arkansas," *Circa* 16, no. 2 (spring 2007): 7.

234 Hoffman, "The Jews of Natchez," 1.

235 Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses*, 13; Leo E. Turitz and Evelyn Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi* (1983; reprint, Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1995), xix.

236 Robert Lewis Berman, *A House of David in the Land of Jesus* (2007), book jacket.

237 Speizman, *The Jews of Charlotte*, 14-15; Jason Schulman and David Rosen, "Writing the Jewish History of New Iberia, Louisiana," *Circa* 16, no. 2 (fall 2007): 8.

238 Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South," 405.

239 Canter Brown, Jr., "Philip and Morris Dzialynski: Jewish Contributions to the Rebuilding of the South," *AJA* 44 (1992): 527.

240 *AC*, 8 June 1895, 3. Also, Melissa Fay Greene, *The Temple Bombing* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1996), 56-63.

241 Stanton, "At One with the Majority," 145.

242 Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 241-42.

243 Shahak, *Jewish History, Jewish Religion,* 20-21. See chap. 2,

"Prejudice and Prevarication," 14-31. Shahak adds parenthetically that

> This is…actually practiced today; thus on 23 March 1980 hundreds of copies of the New Testament were publicly and ceremonially burnt in Jerusalem under the auspices of…a Jewish religious organization subsidized by the Israeli Ministry of Religions.

244 Richard Siegel and Carl Rheins, eds., *The Jewish Almanac* (New York: Bantam Books, 1980), 127-29.

245 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 227-29; Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 227-28.

246 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 116-21, 125.

247 Ehrlich, *Zion in the Valley*, 177.

248 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 267; Steven Hertzberg, "Jewish Community of Atlanta: From the End of the Civil War until the Eve of the Frank Case," *AJHQ* 62, no. 3 (March 1973): 272-73.

249 Wirth, *The Ghetto*, 129.

250 Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl,'" 48, 34. See John Shelton Reed, "Ethnicity in the South: Observations on the Acculturation of Southern Jews," in *"Turn to the South,"* 141.

251 Libo, "The Moseses of Montgomery," 20.

252 Marcus, foreword to *Jews of the South*, vii.

253 Emphasis ours. Barkai, *Branching Out*, 114.

254 Steven Hertzberg, "Southern Jews and Their Encounter with Blacks: Atlanta, 1850-1915," *Atlanta Historical Journal* 23 (1979): 8.

255 Bisno, *Union Pioneer*, 47.

256 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 265, 94.

The Southern Jews' Lost Cause

This land has been good to us all….I shall fight to my last breath to defend that in which I believe.

—

Leopold Jacob Weil, Jewish cotton trader

In the white South, there was no other credential more revered than the war record of a Confederate soldier. More than 3,000 Jews held this "honor," and many more were proud disciples of the so-called Lost Cause—the belief that the Civil War was a sacred crusade for the rights of the slaveholder. It was a movement that was as fundamental to Southern culture as the belief in Jesus is to Christianity. In fact, a healthy and abiding nostalgia for the old Confederacy and the Lost Cause overshadowed even the belief in Jesus when competing for honor in the heart of Dixie. As Professor of History Louis Schmier wrote, "a Confederate war record was an unquestioned credential for these first Jews."[257]

And these pro-slavery Jews were not ambivalent conscripts—they were true believers in every sense. The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience curiously reasons that Jews, "[h]eartened by the

lack of antisemitism…fought for the Confederacy…"[258] In 1862, when Georgia's Jews were challenged on their devotion to the South, outraged Jewish soldiers responded with conviction:

> [Y]ou will behold the representatives of our sect, standing side by side with the gallant sons of the soil, enduring the privations of the camp, the hardships and toils of the march, and the dangers and perils of the battlefield, to win victory for our arms. This is an indisputable fact, which ought to silence forever the clamors of our revilers.[259]

And this sentiment they carried defiantly into the postwar Reconstruction era. Jewish men joined Confederate veterans organizations and jousted with their Gentile compatriots over who was a greater traitor to the white race—Lincoln or Grant. Jewish women joined Confederate auxiliaries, and Southern Jewish newspapers ran pro-Confederate stories of the Civil War and published "Southern War Poetry." The South's most prestigious rabbi, James K. Gutheim, prayed earnestly for the success of the Confederacy, believing the South had embarked on a just and sacred crusade.[260] In 1879, the rabbi of Atlanta's Hebrew Benevolent Congregation, E.B.M. Browne, gave a graduation address in which he compared Robert E. Lee to Jesus Christ. The Congregation later sold its building but stipulated to its *new owners* that "said Temple is never to be sold, rented to, nor to be used by colored people."[261]

Dr. Clive Webb wrote that a unifying ritual in every important Southern town was the erection of war memorials, "usually in the statuesque form of a

young Confederate soldier staring defiantly northwards."[262] Jews joined their Gentile neighbors in honoring the Confederacy, and often they were at the forefront.[263] Richmond Jewish women sent a circular to their coreligionists throughout the South promoting a monument they said would

> serve not only to commemorate the bravery of our dead but the gratitude and admiration of the living for those who so nobly perished in what we deemed a just and righteous cause.[264]

Rabbi Gutheim's wife, co-founder of the Ladies' Confederate Memorial Association of New Orleans, was one of those Jewish women who "clung most tenaciously to the Lost Cause." In 1909, the same year as the founding of the NAACP, Irene Kohn of Orangeburg, South Carolina, was elected state president of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. According to Webb, "It was this organization which also helped to rehabilitate the disgraced former Confederate Secretary of State, Judah [P.] Benjamin, naming one of its chapters after him."

Herbert T. Ezekiel, editor of the *Jewish South* in Richmond, boasted that "the cause is still alive…its sacredness will be inviolable so long as the sun shines in this fair land of ours."[265] Edgar Goldberg, publisher of the *Texas Jewish Herald*, printed articles that "celebrated the myths of the Old South and the Lost Cause."[266] According to one historian, even the ubiquitous Southern peddlers, a substantial majority of whom were Jewish, outdid the "rebels themselves in their expression of rebel sentiment."[267] One Jewish scholar speculates that Rabbi Max Lilienthal was invited to give the keynote address at the 1870 dedication of the

Vicksburg, Mississippi, synagogue because its congregants appreciated his wartime denunciation of abolitionists "as warmongers and radicals."[268] According to the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life:

> When a chapter of the United Confederate Veterans was founded in 1889, Jews like Nathaniel Jacobi, Solomon Bear, Abraham Weill, and William Goodman were charter members. When the UCV chapter called on stores to close on Robert E. Lee's birthday in 1900, most Jewish merchants complied.[269]

Southern Jews were so deeply imbued with this nostalgia for slavery that it was common for them to name their children, not after Biblical prophets as they had done for centuries, but after heroes of the rebel Confederacy. Thus we have Jews named Stonewall Jackson Lilienthal and Robert E. Lee Mayer. Likewise, Augustus Block "showed his loyalty to the Confederacy by naming his son, born during the war, Robert E. Lee." Other great Southern slave-owners were honored in Jewish names like George Washington Harby, George Washington Ochs, Thomas Jefferson Tobias, Henry Clay Greenberg, Jefferson Monroe Levy, and Andrew Jackson Moses.

Natchez, Mississippian Simon Mayer doggedly maintained "the justice of our cause." He wrote that

> I am still proud & defiant, & conscious that while we have been forced to succumb to overwhelming numbers, we have still made an honest and glorious fight…

For the remainder of his life Mayer "continued to idolize southern military and political leaders." When Jacob Samuels of Fort Worth died in 1906, he was buried in a Jewish cemetery "beneath a tombstone etched with the flag of Dixie."[270]

Ultimately, the Jews' active participation in and commitment to the Confederate cause opened doors for them in the South,[271] and the benefits of a Confederate pedigree extended to Jewish businesses. The success of Texas millionaire Harris Kempner was in part attributable to the fact that he was in "good standing" with fellow Confederate army veteran Charles Fry, soon-to-be president of the Bank of New York, who gave him "substantial and enduring advantages."[272]

Jonathan Sarna of Brandeis was accurate when he stated that

> Southern Jews…made the Lost Cause the *centerpiece of their faith*. Focusing on the martyrdom of lost sons, they insisted that the cause for which so many had fought and died was right.[273]

So fervent was this need to identify themselves with the Lost Cause, to promote themselves as having suffered from "Yankee aggression," and to "assert their Southern victimhood" that the Jews of Beth Israel synagogue in Jackson, Mississippi, claimed their synagogue was burned down by Union troops during the Civil War, when, in fact, it had burned down a full decade later.[274]

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257 Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 40; Rogoff, *Down Home*, 188; Dale Rosengarten, "Jewish Antiques Roadshow: Religion and Domestic Culture in the American South," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 269; Harry Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War* (New York: Arco, 1963), 214-15.

258 "Tour 1: Jackson to New Orleans," in *Cultural Corridors:*

Discovering Jewish Heritage Along the Mississippi River (Jackson, MS: Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 1998).

259 Louis Schmier, "An Act Unbecoming: Anti-Semitic Uprising in Thomas County, Georgia," *Civil War Times Illustrated* 23 (Oct. 1984): 24.

260 Langston, "James K. Gutheim," 77-78.

261 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 243-44; Goldstein, "'Now Is the Time to Show Your True Colors,'" in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 143.

262 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 98.

263 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 268; Robert E. May, review of *The Jewish Confederates*, by Robert N. Rosen, *Shofar* 20, no. 3 (spring 2002): 161-62; ISJL, "Mississippi."

264 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 243 n. 17. On Southern women's involvement generally, see Isaac Hermann, *Memoirs of a Veteran* (Atlanta, 1911), 274-75. Also, Bauman, "A Multithematic Approach to Southern Jewish History," 270. Albert Mordell, "Jewish Participants in the Civil War," review in *Jewish Quarterly Review* (Oct. 1963), 175: "The Jewish female population of the South were more virulent in their hatred of Lincoln and more fanatical in upholding the Confederacy than the men."

265 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 99.

266 Bryan Edward Stone, "Edgar Goldberg and the *Texas Jewish Herald*: Changing Coverage and Blended Identity," *SJH* 7 (2004): 74.

267 E. Merton Coulter, *The South During Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1947), 202.

268 Herscovici, *The Jews of Vicksburg, Mississippi*, 103. Also, Charles Reagan Wilson, "The Religion of the Lost Cause," in *Myth and Southern History*, vol. 1, *The Old South*, eds. Patrick Gerster and Nicholas Cords (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1989), 184.

269 ISJL, "Wilmington, North Carolina."

270 See Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s–1990s* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994), 40; "The Story of Confederate Major Simon Mayer," *Circa* 6, no. 2 (fall 1997): 5; Hollace Ava Weiner, "Fort Worth's Vibrant Past: Historical Snapshots," *Circa* 10, no. 3 (summer 2001): 12.

271 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," viii.

272 Harold M. Hyman, *Oleander Odyssey: The Kempners of Galveston, Texas, 1854-1980s* (College Station: Texas A & M Univ. Press, 1990), 31; Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 91.

273 Emphasis ours. Sarna, *American Judaism*, 124. Mark K. Bauman, *The Southerner As American*, 9, writes that "Jews in the South were never allowed to share in the myths of…the Lost Cause." Though his view is at odds with most scholarship on the subject, Bauman's statement nonetheless indicates that Jews *desired* to share in this clearly white supremacist racial heritage.

274 Stuart Rockoff, "Playing Southern Jewish History Detective," *Circa* 12, no. 3 (fall 2003): 9. *Circa* is a publication of Goldring/ Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life and the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience. See the museum's own brochure, which

promotes the erroneous story: *Cultural Corridors: Discovering Jewish Heritage Along the Mississippi River* (Jackson, MS: Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 1998).

The Behavior of Southern Jews Toward Their Black Neighbors

The fundamental tenet of today's Black–Jewish relationship is the belief that Blacks and Jews are linked by a history of "shared suffering" at the hands of white Gentile oppressors. But not a single Jewish historian can be found who supports this claim. Albert Lindemann is one of many scholars who concede that Southern Jews did not "openly or prominently sympathize with the plight of the lower orders, whether Black or White."[275] Drs. Weisbord and Stein, authors of a respected book on Blacks and Jews, are similarly convinced that "Despite the tragic European past of their own people, they must have found it extremely difficult to identify with their degraded, dark-skinned neighbors."[276] Even when Blacks reached out to Southern Jews for sympathy and assistance, writes Dr. Harold Brackman, the Jews

> were *too sensible* to the risks involved to respond with open arms to black leaders making such friendly overtures.[277]

The relationship that did exist between Blacks and Jews in the post–Civil War South was in full harmony with Southern racial protocol. It was strictly commercial and occurred almost entirely at the retail point of sale, at the pleasure and the dictates of Jews, who, as whites, accepted and thrived in their role as defenders and enforcers of the status quo. The cash flow in this economic pairing flowed but one way—from Blacks to Jews. Blacks were invariably customers, servants, and laborers, and Jews were invariably merchants, moneylenders, and employers. Several historians allude to this exploitative arrangement in various

ways, mostly euphemistically. Dr. Theodore Rosengarten said: the Jews' "transition into Southern culture was eased…by the influence of their African-American customers and workers."[278] Dr. Carolyn Lipson-Walker, a Jewish historian, is more illustrative on this point:

> Indeed, contact with Black Southerners is limited to a relationship of employer with employee. Blacks are customers in Jewish-owned stores, maids and yardmen in the home.…Southern Jews socialize primarily with other Southern Jews and middle, upper-middle, and upper class White, Christian Southerners.[279]

Historian Theodore Saloutos summed up the abusive relationship all European Americans had with African Americans: Blacks "were deceived by many in whom they trusted, and they were unacceptable to those who were in a position to help them."[280] And by all accounts, and with few exceptions, Jewish beliefs about Blacks closely mirrored the Southern way of thinking. One of the founding professors of Brandeis University, Charlestonian Jew Ludwig Lewisohn, grew up believing that

> the Democratic party was the only means, under providence, of saving the White Race from obliteration by the Nigger...

He thought his beloved state "lay prostrate under the intolerable tyranny of a barbarous and inferior race," namely, Blacks. Lewisohn did not claim to be forced into such beliefs. By his own testimony, "I shared their faith and their morals..."

His father was a merchant in the deep South, and though he grew rich trading with Blacks, he "treated the Negro customers with contemptuous disregard."[281] One Jewish family in Durham, North Carolina, employed a Black man—whom the children called "Uncle"—who was forced to sleep under the porch with the cow.[282]

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275 Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 233-34.

276 Weisbord and Stein, *Bittersweet Encounter*, 32.

277 Emphasis ours. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 337. Brackman ["The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of Black-Jewish Relations Through 1900, Pt. 2" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1977), 518 n. 228] quotes Jewish writer S.M. Melamed: "It would be criminal folly on the part of the American Jew to provoke the Gentile by treating the Negro as an equal."

278 Interview with Dr. Theodore Rosengarten, "Scholar Shares History of Jews in South Carolina," Presbyterian College, Nov. 4, 2003, http://www.presby.edu/visit/news/2003_news/110403_southernjews.htm.

279 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all,'" 60.

280 Saloutos, "Southern Agriculture," 60.

281 Ludwig Lewisohn, *Up Stream: An American Chronicle* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1922), 42-43, 74, 52-53; Ralph Melnick, "Ludwig Lewisohn: The Early Charleston Years," in *Studies in the American Jewish Experience,* vol. 2, eds. Jacob R. Marcus and Abraham J. Peck (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1984), 125; Stanley F. Chyet, "Ludwig Lewisohn in Charleston (1892–1903)," *AJHQ* 54, no. 3 (March 1965): 321, 321 n. 57.

282 Rogoff, *Down Home*, 158.

The Jewish View of Black Emancipation

President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 freed not a single slave,[283] but its ostensible promise of Black citizenship still irked many Jews. The *Jewish Record* newspaper "was especially hostile to the ideological underpinnings of the Proclamation," wrote Dr. Brackman, and was particularly outraged at analogies drawn between it and Old Testament Jewish lore.[284] David Naar, owner and editor of the *Daily True American*, believed that

> The injustice of this measure is only exceeded, we think, by its impolicy….What is to be gained by the emancipation of the slaves in any point of view, we have never been able to discover; but to the contrary…it will be of great harm to the population of the non-slave holding States, both white and colored.

Americans were "cutting each other's throats" for the sake of a few slaves, he posited, and the abolitionists wanted to place the Black man above the white man.[285]

It would take the Thirteenth Amendment two years later to end slavery legally, but a full thirty years later in 1896 the editors of the *Jewish South* newspaper opined, "Negroes are intellectually, morally, and physically an inferior race—a fact none can deny."[286] One "cultured Southern Jew" saw the freed Black man and woman as such a distinct curse on his own citizenship that he wrote: "The *extermination* of this race is a necessary consequence of this state of affairs."[287]

In 1882, Houston, Texas, rabbi Jacob Voorsanger wrote to a sympathetic Jewish newspaper to complain about the Blacks celebrating the anniversary of the Proclamation:

> The negroes had a procession [and] scowled at the white folks, upon whom they are absolutely depending for bread and meat….[O]ne feels that the colored gentlemen are being very far from the level where a white man cares to meet with them.

Blacks are acceptable, he said, "if pursuing their ordinary avocations as the hewers of wood and water carriers of society." But when Northern Republicans stir up their "sluggish blood" they become "intolerable, if not absolutely dangerous." Dr. Bryan Edward Stone noted:

> Rather than join African Americans in celebrating their escape from slavery (as, indeed, Jews do every year at Passover), Voorsanger used the opportunity to voice common prejudices and to condemn Yankee agitators: it is less the comment of the leader of a persecuted minority than that of a vocal member of the white majority.[288]

Rabbi and historian Bertram W. Korn made a remarkable confession in his landmark article "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South":

> Even in the days of the secession crisis, and the subsequent prolongated war and eventual defeat, many Southern Jews believed slavery to be indispensable to

their happiness and security.[289]

Meyer Goldman's son wrote to a friend in October 1874, alarmed at the migration of Blacks to his state of Louisiana and their support of the hated Republican "Party of Lincoln": "It seems that Negroes…are also stirring up much trouble." He was disturbed by his own unfounded suspicion that almost every office in the state government was occupied by a Black man. Goldman believed the situation had become so intolerable that he was closing his law practice and moving out of the state.[290] Jewish merchant Jonas Rosenthal of Alexandria, Louisiana, joined a gang of whites that intended to murder a white Republican party leader who treated Blacks favorably. Rosenthal's (or his relative's) country store was the place where three Black elected officials were told that they "would be killed" if they did not leave town.[291]

Dr. Clive Webb wrote that Southern Jews were no different from other whites, in that they "regarded the restoration of the old racial order as an end which justified any means." Isaac Hermann of Sandersville, Georgia, was a Confederate veteran and a full-fledged Ku Klux Klansman. He firmly believed the ex-slaves' "best protectors were the old masters who had so lovingly provided for them."[292] Charles Rubin, a Polish immigrant growing up in Georgia, recalled:

> I heard the term "nigger" used by Jewish sons of immigrant parents with the same venom and contempt as the term "Zhid" was used in the old country [against Jews].[293]

In his *Reminiscences of Charleston*, Jacob Nunez Cardozo yearned for that "species of patriarchal

relation…that reciprocity of protection and obedience that exists between master and servant." He insisted that where once there had been harmony between Blacks and whites, now—*because of emancipation*—there was only discord. The De Leon brothers, according to one scholar, rewrote "the horror story of slavery…as a historical romance." Edwin De Leon, the Confederate diplomat, believed slavery developed a natural bond between master and servant. The slave, he declared, was "a purely animal creature," who showed a "spaniel-like affection" for his owner.[294]

New Orleans rabbi Max Heller, leader of the largest Southern Jewish congregation, felt absolutely no need to conceal the Jews' conspicuously lengthy résumé of white supremacist behavior. More than fifty years after the Confederate defeat, he was proud that his people had held high ranks in the rebel army and government. Speaking of the unity of Jews and Gentiles in the South, Heller concluded in 1922 that racial hatred was its basis, its binding glue, its very root:

> The Civil War *and the struggle for white supremacy* tended to unite the white population through the cement of shared suffering.[295]

Heller felt he needed to reinforce the Jewish point of view in the pages of the agreeable *American Israelite*, the most prominent and respected Jewish newspaper in the nation:

> The negro, with the solitary exception of Australian and Polynesian, is the most backward of human races; his contributions to human progress have

> been insignificant; the Jew, quite to the contrary, has the unique distinction of being the sole survivor of the three great pillar-bearers of modern culture (Greek, Roman and Jew), of having been the cornerstone-builder of the moral and religious principles of the modern world. The negro's bondage has been mostly physical and industrial, wherever he was enslaved; but his progress, at least in this country, was far greater under slavery than it had been in the state of freedom….Accordingly, highly creditable though the achievements of the negro since emancipation undoubtedly are, they cannot be remotely compared with the eminence the emancipated Jew has attained in numerous fields of public usefulness. For, after all is said, the Jew, *belonging to the best blood of the white race*, stands physically, mentally, culturally far nearer than ever can the negro, to the Western nations among whom he has cast his lot as a full-grown citizen, with every duty and responsibility of complete citizenship.[296]

The *Israelite*'s national readership did not complain or offer an opposing point of view. The more recent recollections of a Louisiana Jew show that long after slavery the Jews' racial psychology *vis-à-vis* their Black fellow "citizens" remained consistent and largely unchanged. This passage from the 1997 memoir by Leta Weiss Marks illustrates the extent of the Black–Jewish relationship—from a Jewish perspective:

> On the way to Madisonville to buy candy

> we often took a shortcut off the paved road onto the muddy footpath and passed a cluster of squalid shacks. “Niggerville,” I remember my father calling it, for this was the South of the 1930s.[297]

The Jewish father, here teaching the fine points of race relations to his daughter, was the noted architect Leon Weiss, whom Gov. Huey Long chose to design the state capitol and the governor’s mansion. Weiss waxed nostalgic for the great Lost Cause and decorated his architecture with Mississippi River plantation life motifs.[298] In her Jewish Louisiana experience, daughter Leta Weiss found any association between Blacks and Jews to be a very remote possibility:

> I saw strange inconsistencies such as our having only white nurses caring for us as infants and black cooks preparing our food, but I could not comprehend the assumptions or the dreadful fears and beliefs underlying the ugly realities of segregation or the racist language I heard all around me and used myself. For I was brought up to be a passive child, a silent little girl.[299]

Of course, the racial attitudes of the Weiss family were perfectly assimilationist and consistent with Southern racial norms and extended far beyond the innocence and naïveté of Southern Jewish childhood. New Orleans Jew George Abel Dreyfous hung a picture of Robert E. Lee on his wall and “spat at the statue of Abraham Lincoln.” He had “fired the ‘colored’ upstairs maid for forgetting to call him ‘Sir.’”[300]

When Atlanta Jewish architect Cecil Alexander

went to Yale and reported home that he had "played catch" with a Black man on campus, "[y]ou would have thought I was going to marry a Hottentot from the kind of response I got from my father."[301] In 1923, Jewish southerner Josephine Joel Heyman attended Smith College in Massachusetts and was asked whether she believed Blacks should have equal rights and the right to vote. She said, "No." "[W]e all admit it is undesirable for the black race to swamp the white but that is what they may do *if we gave a true Democracy*."[302] The "black race" did, however, have a place in her Southern Jewish family home. Their cook, maid, butler, and chauffer were all Black, and were needed, she says, "to maintain the household of seven in appropriate style." The Black servants were all housed in back of the Heyman home.[303]

Kentucky poet I. J. Schwartz depicted Blacks as minstrel caricatures, complete with eye-rolls, ear-to-ear grins, wooly heads, red lips, and pearly white teeth—and he was *sympathetic* to Blacks. He recounted the European immigrants' Americanization process that began as children. "A nigger is a nigger, and that's that!" says Schwartz's fictitious Jewish child character, who with his friends plays tricks "designed to terrify Black children."[304]

The testimony of most Southern-born Jews echoes that of celebrated Jewish writer David L. Cohn (1896–1960), whose fond memories of the South seem entirely insensitive to the plight of the Blacks all around him. To him the Mississippi Delta "was a good place for a growing boy." He wrote that in Greenville,

> my Jewish parents were welcomed by their new neighbors with dignity and

> warmth. They were one with them throughout their lives in sickness and death and hard times and rejoicings...[305]

And Jews in their overwhelmingly Christian surroundings "were one" with their Gentile compatriots, and they mirrored their attitudes in other respects as well. Three Jews served as mayor of Greenville in the 1870s. One Black resident, however, held a pointedly opposite view:

> I want to get my family out of this cursed south land. Down here a negro man is not as good as a white man's dog.[306]

Nonetheless, Cohn considered himself a proud Jewish Son of the South. And despite being born a generation after the war, he was as unapologetically Confederate as any of his Hebrew brethren who soldiered in defense of slavery.[307] To Cohn, the word "planter" "conjured up a certain lordliness of living and a touch of the romantic."

Racial harmony did exist, he assures us, but "only for the Negro who 'stays in his place.'"

> [T]he present relatively *untutored* Negro of the Delta harbors no feelings of resentment or bitterness or revenge against the whites unless the disabilities under which he labors are too cruelly pressed upon him. If he is able to earn a living and seek happiness among his own people, he is content [emphasis ours].

Even rape is glossed over with an air of entitlement: "white men have not hesitated to pour their blood into the veins of Negroes." But as for

reciprocation: “There shall not be, under any circumstances whatsoever…”[308]

Some Blacks watched this Southern Jewish racial tragedy and wondered in print, at times bitterly, what it all had to do with the laws and commandments of God they believed Jews had come to represent. According to scholar David J. Hellwig, “They argued that Jews should know better than to discriminate.” An anonymous writer stated in the *New Orleans Louisianian* in 1879 that

> It was a “melancholy fact” that Jews had to be classified with the Negro hater as a result of their efforts to win acceptance among Christian whites….

The editor of the *Christian Recorder* complained that Jews almost instinctively had taken to “the spirit of negro-phobia.” He said that they had been among the meanest of slave-owners and the staunchest defenders of slavery and that emancipation had not altered their attitudes.[309]

As Blacks continued to be disfranchised, segregated, and lynched, according to Jewish scholar Philip S. Foner, “little aid came from the Jewish community or press.”[310]

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283 See a full discussion of this in *Forced into Glory: Abraham Lincoln’s White Dream,* by Lerone Bennett (Chicago: Johnson Publishing, 2000).

284 Brackman, “The Ebb and Flow of Conflict,” 318.

285 S. Joshua Kohn, “David Naar of Trenton, New Jersey,” *AJHQ* 53 (1963-64): 386-87.

286 Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 225.

287 Emphasis ours. Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 20.

288 Stone, “West of Center,” 112-13.

289 Korn, “Jews and Negro Slavery,” 194.

290 Webb, “A History of Black-Jewish Relations,” 90-91.

291 LeeAnna Keith, *The Colfax Massacre: The Untold Story of Black*

Power, White Terror, and the Death of Reconstruction (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2008), 32, 49, 129-30, 150-51.

292 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 94, 94 n. 51. Hermann actually maintained that "a white man would have freely offered his life for the protection of his servants." See Isaac Hermann, *Memoirs of a Veteran* (Atlanta, 1911), 234.

293 Arnold Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends: Afro-Americans View the Immigrant* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 132-33; Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 232-33. "Zhid" is a Russian anti-Jewish insult.

294 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 97-98; Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 138. Cardozo owned and edited the influential white supremacist newspaper *Southern Patriot*.

295 Emphasis ours. Heller, *Jubilee Souvenir of Temple Sinai*, 39-40.

296 Emphasis ours. Rabbi Max Heller, "The Jewish and the Negro Problem," *American Israelite*, 18 Sept. 1913, 4.

297 Leta Weiss Marks, *Time's Tapestry: Four Generations of a New Orleans Family* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1997), 4.

298 Leon Weiss was convicted of federal corruption and imprisoned, according to Marks, because "the overwhelming evidence against him seemed more tangible to the jury than did all the words of friends and associates." Two other Jews were also convicted in the scandal: Abe Shushan and Seymour Weiss, who had just been convicted of embezzlement. See Marks, *Time's Tapestry*, 14, 72-73. Marks also claims (p. 139) that her legislator grandfather "made an attempt to oppose Jim Crow…He voted against one House version of the segregation statute *but ended up siding with the overwhelming majority on the final bill.*" (Emphasis ours) See also Hugh Davis Graham, ed., *Huey Long* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 90.

299 Marks, *Time's Tapestry*, 106, 123.

300 Ibid., 119, 120. Other anti-Lincoln Jews, in Rosen, "Jewish Confederates," 112.

301 Howard Simons, *Jewish Times: Voices of the American Jewish Experience* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), 221. Alexander uses his father's reaction to demonstrate how "liberal" he is but only reveals another layer of racism by his slight against Khoikhoi women.

302 Emphasis ours. Mark K. Bauman, "The Youthful Musings of a Jewish Community Activist: Josephine Joel Heyman," *Atlanta History* 39, no. 2 (summer 1995): 55.

303 Ibid., 48.

304 I. J. Schwartz, *Kentucky*, trans. Gertrude W. Dubrovsky (Tuscaloosa, AL: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1990), 13, 15, 52, 53. Ironically, Blacks are defended by the character's father using the biblical Curse of Ham myth: "Ham is not responsible for his black skin," he pleads. Also, there is testimony that two Jewish children left food for an underfed enslaved Black woman. See Ruthe Winegarten and Cathy Schechter, *Deep in the Heart: The Lives and Legends of Texas Jews* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1990), 23.

305 James C. Cobb, ed., *The Mississippi Delta and the World: The Memoirs of David L. Cohn* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1995), 2-3, also 171, 197; Eliza R. L. McGraw, "An 'Intense Heritage': Southern Jewishness in Literature and Film," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil,* 212; McGraw, *Two Covenants*, 46.

306 "Niggers plants de cotton,/ Niggers picks it out,/ White man pockets money,/ Niggers does without." See Cobb, *The Mississippi Delta and the World*, 174; Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 86, 171.

307 Cobb, *The Mississippi Delta and the World*, 196. See McGraw, *Two Covenants*, 43-51.

308 Cobb, *The Mississippi Delta and the World*, 185-88.

309 Hellwig, "Black Images of Jews," 213-14.

310 Philip S. Foner, "Black-Jewish Relations in the Opening Years of the Twentieth Century," *Phylon* 36, no. 4 (winter 1975): 362.

Southern Jews & Their Black Scapegoats

The term "scapegoat" is used mostly in reference to the persecution of Jews in Nazi Europe. Biblically, the scapegoat was a sacrificial goat driven into the wilderness as part of the Jewish ceremony of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. The rite is described in Leviticus 16:7-10.

The term is used today in reference to one who is falsely blamed for misfortunes to distract attention from the real villain or cause. Throughout American history, the Black man has been the official scapegoat of white society, blamed for all manner of political, social, and economic ills and (along with the Native American) victimized periodically by violent mob eruptions.[311] And though the term is most often associated with them, Jews have *never* occupied the role of scapegoat at any time in American history. On the contrary, there is no shortage of scholarly testimony admitting that Jews actually benefited from the racist scapegoating of Blacks in American society.

The presence of the lowly Black slave necessarily bonded all disparate elements of the master class. Where skin color is the sole factor in determining one's status and opportunities, the Jews' white skin consciously became a cherished privilege. Whiteness is the basis of all American freedoms and the Jews partook of this advantage, identifying totally with the "master race."[312] Generations before Hitler reordered the Caucasian hierarchy for his own purposes, Jews in Dixie "imbibed generously of its pervasive racist sentiment," admits Baruch College professor Dr. Henry Feingold, "and participated in the ritualized violence formalized in its 'code duello.'" There was a "concealed advantage in living in a society which

reserved most of its fear and rancor for its blacks."[313] Dr. Brackman sees this as a feature of the Black–Jewish dynamic in both the North and the South in the Civil War era. Black New Yorkers, he wrote,

> bore the main brunt of the war-heightened social tensions that, *had there been no black scapegoats*, would certainly have borne much more heavily on a white minority with multiple vulnerabilities like the Jews.[314]

Author Eli Evans wrote that Southern Jews

> attribute the lack of personal anti-Semitic incidents to the presence of the Negro, whom they refer to as "the lightning rod for prejudice" (a phrase I heard many, many times).[315]

Louis Schmier uses the same language in his analysis:

> the presence of blacks acts as a lightning rod to attract antagonistic attitudes which otherwise might be directed against the Jews. That is to say, either the Jews are considered white first and live as part of the white majority, or the Gentiles are so busy hating blacks that they have little time for the Jews, or, having vented their spleen on the blacks, they were satisfied.[316]

Jewish folklorist David Max Eichhorn wrote that the Southern Jew

> was spared some of the indignities suffered by the Jews in more northern states, mainly because of the ubiquitous presence of a convenient scapegoat, *the black*.[317]

Yeshiva University professor Jeffrey Gurock could not have offered a more succinct analysis: "Jewish acceptance in Dixie was greatly facilitated by the presence of a class of people beneath them in Southern society." Gurock's evidence indicates that Jews did not necessarily need an open, free, and democratic society to prosper and to be accepted. They only needed "a subservient group" to deflect prejudices and to absorb the abuses that historically had been focused on Jews.[318] Rabbi Dana Evan Kaplan states in the *Journal of Jewish Studies* that "partially as a consequence of the racial division," the Jews faced an "idyllic situation."[319] Leon Harris discusses the remarkable rise of Jewish-owned department stores in the South, like Neiman-Marcus and Rich's, and reasons that

> After the War and Reconstruction, the exploitation and consequent hatred of the "niggers" on the part of many Southern whites diverted much of the hostility that might otherwise have been directed at Jews.[320]

Dr. Louis Schmier, an Anti-Defamation League researcher, wrote very forthrightly that "The need for a buffer was deeply rooted in the haunting sense of difference that pervaded the thinking of both Jew and Gentile." Jews felt secure, he wrote in another article, "with the Negro as a shielding buffer who would absorb gentile animosity..."[321]

The director of Jewish Studies at the State

University of New York, Dr. Gerald Sorin, wrote that the South's "strenuous devotion to white supremacy…undoubtedly deflected some anti-Semitism."[322] Brandeis's Irving Howe, author of the most popular book on American Jewish history, *World of Our Fathers*, added that

> For decades American blacks had served…as a kind of buffer for American Jews. So long as native hatreds were taken out primarily on blacks, they were less likely to be taken out on Jews.[323]

The white liberal journalist Jonathan Daniels concurred that in most Southern towns "the direction of racial prejudice at the Negro frees the Jews from prejudice altogether—or nearly altogether."[324] The winner of the 2003 Southern Jewish History Book Prize, Dr. Clive Webb, stated:

> No doubt white animosity towards African-Americans continued to deflect criticism of an ethnic minority which might otherwise have found itself more openly despised and discriminated against.[325]

Black scholar Yvonne D. Newsome says that the Southern racial ideology "aided Jews as whites to achieve greater social, economic, and political success in that region than they did in the North."[326] Rabbi Bertram W. Korn extends this analysis:

> The Jews were white, and this very fact goes a long way towards accounting for the measurably higher social and political status achieved by Jews in the South than in the North….The Negroes

> acted as an escape-valve in Southern society. The Jews gained in status and security from the very presence of this large mass of defenseless victims who were compelled to absorb all of the prejudices which might otherwise have been expressed more frequently in anti-Jewish sentiment.…[T]he road to social and economic advancement and acceptance for many Jews was smoothed by the ever-present race distinction which imputed superiority to all whites.[327]

The "dean of Jewish historians," Jacob Rader Marcus, wrote that Jews "made a place for themselves because of the blacks and the region's racial imbalance."[328] Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Stein:

> Race consciousness in Dixie resulted in benefit to the Jew as a white man. Differences between whites were submerged in a society that was preoccupied with maintaining the subordinate status of blacks.[329]

Harry Golden:

> Though they will not say so openly, much of their [the Jews'] argument for neutrality [concerning race issues] is based on the folklore that Gentile society must have its *kapporeh* (scapegoat), and that if the Southerners should lose their Negro *kapporeh*, they might very well look around for another.

Golden considered it “the irony of ironies” that “the closest social relations between Jew and Gentile are the result of a common interest in the Negro.”[330] Blacks acted as “a lightning rod,” wrote scholar Steven Hertzberg,

> in deflecting prejudices which might otherwise have been manifested against Jews, and by parenthetically ordaining the equality of all whites, slavery conferred indirect benefits even on poor Jewish newcomers.[331]

Historian Selma S. Lewis concluded that Jews found the Jim Crow city of Memphis a “favorable place” to live because “blacks have been the *primary scapegoats*, sparing the Jews the role they usually filled.”[332] Dr. Stuart Rockoff, of the Institute of Southern Jewish Life, wrote that

> It is clear that southern Jews…benefited from the anti-black racism that would shape the South for the next century.[333]

And these scholars find confirmation in the folk wisdom of the rank and file: “My grandmother used to say,” affirmed a woman from a prominent Southern Jewish family, “too long it was us. Now it is their [the Blacks’] turn. Better it should be that way.” A Jewish peddler traveling the South asked,

> Is it so bad that they should hate someone else [the Black man] for a change? Let them. It keeps them too busy to bother with us.[334]

And Gentiles were found specifically playing into this dynamic by favoring Jews over Blacks in

the public discourse. Dr. Schmier presents the case of the *South Georgia Times* editor, P. C. Pendleton, who, in issue after issue, passionately contrasted Blacks and Jews to stir up negative fears about Blacks and positive admiration for Jews. As Schmier says, Pendleton's selective racism

> guaranteed that the newly freed, feared, and disliked freedman [Blacks] would become a target of emotions which might otherwise have been aimed at the Jews.

Pendleton angrily cast the "irresponsible" Black man as the bane of white society. Jews, on the other hand, were lauded for an array of intrinsic values worthy of admiration and emulation. The Jew was the "proper…type of industrious white German immigrant" that could stem the tide of "spreading niggerism." Even the Jews' supposed physical differences were addressed: "To the benefit of the Jews," wrote Pendleton, their noses were better than the "lazy" and "not fine" African nose. The Jews accepted the premises and conclusions of the Pendletons of the South, and never repudiated these kinds of racist endorsements that were at the expense of the Black character. Pendleton, according to Schmier, pictured Jews "as the far lesser of two evils"—effectively mitigating any potential anti-Semitism while simultaneously fanning the flames of racial violence and exclusion.[335]

The reality is that Jews had no compelling interest in seeing Blacks emerge from their degraded political, economic, and social station at the bottom of American society. So it stands to reason that their communal strategies would be geared at all costs to maintaining and reinforcing the racial status quo.

311 See for instance Allen D. Grimshaw, ed., *Racial Violence in the United States* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).

312 Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1998).

313 Henry L. Feingold, *Zion in America: The Jewish Experience from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1974), 61; Golden, *Our Southern Landsman*, 108-9. See also Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, 23; Jacob J. Weinstein, "Anti-Semitism," in *The American Jew: A Composite Portrait*, ed. Oscar I. Janowsky (New York: Harper & Bros., 1942), 185-86; Berson, *The Negroes and the Jews*, 14, 22; Hoffman, "The Jews of Natchez," 11.

314 Emphasis ours. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 315. See Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," 78.

315 Evans, *The Provincials*, 212, 221.

316 Schmier, *Reflections of Southern Jewry*, 173.

317 Emphasis ours. David Max Eichhorn, *Jewish Folklore in America* (Middle Village, NY: J. David Publishers, 1996), 151; Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates*, 31.

318 Gurock, "The Jews of Dixie," 74. Other scholars concur on this general theme. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 270; Myron Berman, *The Last of the Jews?* (Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 1998), 23, 104; Berson, *The Negroes and the Jews*, 22; Hertzberg, "Southern Jews and Their Encounter with Blacks," 8, 19: "[S]lavery conferred indirect benefits even on poor Jewish newcomers." "…Atlanta's Jews clearly benefited from the system of white supremacy." Also, Rabbi Bertram W. Korn wrote that "The Negroes acted as an escape-valve in Southern society," in his "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865," *PAJHS* 50, no. 3 (March 1961): 200.

319 Dana Evan Kaplan, "The Determination of Jewish Identity below the Mason-Dixon Line: Crossing the Boundary From Gentile to Jew in the Nineteenth-Century American South," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 52, no. 1 (spring 2001): 101-2.

320 Leon Harris, *Merchant Princes: An Intimate History of Jewish Families Who Built Great Department Stores* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 127.

321 Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 41-42; Louis Schmier, "Jews and Gentiles in a South Georgia Town," *Jews of the South: Selected Essays from the Southern Jewish Historical Society*, eds. Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1984), 3; Hero, *The Southerner and World Affairs*, 495; Leonard Reissman, "The New Orleans Jewish Community," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 4 (1962): 121. Also see Richard L. Zweigenhaft, *Jews in the Protestant Establishment* (New York: Praeger, 1982), 73-74; Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006), 52. Naomi Wiener Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States, 1830-1914* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1984), 22-23:

> The slaves…constituted a buffer for the peddler. The

> latter could be a Jew and a foreigner, but he was still white. Isidor Straus of Macy's…wrote that…."[Slavery] drew a line of demarcation between the white and black race and was largely instrumental in giving every white man a sort of status of equality which probably did not prevail in sections where slavery did not exist." The same advantage [was] obtained in the Southwest, where bigotry was deflected to the Indian or Mexican.

322 Sorin, *A Time for Building*, 165.

323 Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Touchstone, 1976), 631.

324 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 129; Howard N. Rabinowitz, "Nativism, Bigotry and Anti-Semitism in the South," *AJH* 77 (1988): 447.

325 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 135.

326 Newsome, "A House Divided," 60.

327 Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery," 200.

328 Marcus, *United States Jewry*, 1:216-17.

329 Weisbord and Stein, *Bittersweet Encounter*, 22.

330 Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South," 412. Golden reinforces this point in *Jewish Roots in the Carolinas: A Pattern of American Philo-Semitism* (Greensboro, NC: Deal Printing, 1955), 48. He suggests that this is also what motivated Jewish resistance to Black progress in the North. See Golden, interview, 31-32. Also, Harry L. Golden and Albert Vorspan, "Unease in Dixie," *Midstream* 2, no. 4 (autumn 1956): 41.

331 Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 182, 221. Bauman, *The Southerner As American*, 15-16, 24: "…the presence of African Americans who bore the brunt of southern persecution deflected potential prejudice." Also ibid., 42 n. 33; Thomas D. Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy in the South," *AJHQ* 55 (1965-66): 430; Hellwig, "Black Images of Jews," 214.

332 Emphasis ours. Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, xi, 2, 34, 46-47: The anti-Black Memphis Riot was "a strong signal to the Jewish community that the primary role of scapegoat would not be theirs in Memphis. It reinforced the feeling of belonging that Jews in Memphis had enjoyed, in large measure, ever since their arrival in the city."

333 ISJL, "Valdosta, Georgia."

334 Louis Schmier, "'For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough': A Jewish Peddler and His Black Customers Look at Each Other," *AJH* 73, no. 1 (Sept. 1983): 48-49. See also Louis Schmier, "Hellooo! Peddler Man! Hellooo!" in *Ethnic Minorities in Gulf Coast Society*, eds. Jerrell H. Shofner and Linda V. Ellsworth (Pensacola, FL: Gulf Coast History & Humanities Conference, 1979), 79; and Schmier, "Jews and Gentiles in a South Georgia Town," 3.

335 Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 36-38. According to Schmier, the articles about the "freedman" and the Jew "were placed adjacent to each other so the reader could not help but graphically contrast the social sins of the freedman described in one column with the social virtues of the Jew lauded in the other." ISJL, "Valdosta,

Georgia." See also William Wallace Screws's philo-Semitism as editor at the *Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser,* in Stanton, "At One with the Majority," 150-51. Gentiles encouraged Jewish immigration to the South. See Herscovici, *The Jews of Vicksburg, Mississippi*, 30-35. See also Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks*, 2:100: In 1869 an Atlanta Jew was sent in an official capacity to Germany to recruit prospective settlers.

Jewish Collaboration With Race Hatred

If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong.

—

Abraham Lincoln

Throughout the Jewish literature one encounters again and again the subtle suggestion that Jews adopted anti-Black attitudes and behaviors not because they actually were racist, but because they were desirous of securing acceptance in mainstream white society. Dr. Mark Greenberg, for instance, wrote, "Jews believed that adopting middle-class customs could…win respectability within a Christian society"; he claimed that one of their strategies was their "use of house servants."[336] Greenberg poses Jews as fearful and submissive to justify an essentially unjustifiable set of behaviors:

> [Jews] witnessed the prevalence of racism against blacks and believed that discrimination based on color was accepted practice in America; because slave ownership, especially as sectional tensions escalated, marked Jews as loyal to planter interests; and because slaves were a highly profitable investment in the antebellum South, especially in the 1850s. In essence, Jewish participation in the region's slave owning practices had numerous social and economic benefits

> and few liabilities for people eager to prosper and to remove the stigma of being outsiders.

Greenberg goes on to describe the racist violence, slavery, and Jim Crow system not as crimes against humanity, but as "distinctly southern cultural forms," which Jews practiced in order "to win acceptance from the host society."[337] But by advancing this reasoning, Greenberg is thus acknowledging that Judaism with all its 57 centuries of collected wisdom was effortlessly replaced in Jewish hearts and minds by what they perceived as "accepted practice in America"—no matter how repugnant it may have been to the well-established tenets of their faith.

Professor of History Harold M. Hyman quotes Texas rabbi Henry Cohen, who believed that "The Jews have a mission in the world….to protest against everything unjust." But Hyman conceded that "[r]ace inequality was not labeled as 'unjust' on…Cohen's agenda. White-on-top race hierarchy was not even a dilemma" for him. He found that the rabbi was completely "untroubled in mind" about the "sour, narrow paths that blacks could traverse." Hyman likewise analyzes the attitude of Harris Kempner, a wealthy Texas businessman:

> In tolerating and sometimes profiting from race inequalities, Kempner continued a long tradition among southern Jews.…Since emancipation, Jews in Dixie had helped to readjust state and local laws and customs to keep blacks substantially less equal in their freedom.[338]

Selma S. Lewis, a scholar of Memphis Jewry,

explains the racial ethos common to both Jews and Gentiles in that Southern city:

> The idea of white supremacy was held above religion, morality, or love by adherents in all classes, and the fanaticism with which it was defended explains much of the violence in the city during the early years of the twentieth century.[339]

In his book about anti-Semitism, Dr. Albert S. Lindemann dissects the Southern Jewish mind and its uncritical acceptance of racism. "Southern Jews," he wrote, "were inclined…to construct romantic mythologies about their racially superior and aristocratic origins." Lindemann does not help us to understand the source of this racist inclination but goes on to describe the behaviors of these Jews, who he says became "prominent and articulate defenders of southern mores, thus naturally earning the gratitude of many southerners." He admits that "prominent Jews were quick, in this period of racial tension, to make clear their identification with White supremacist attitudes."[340]

Nor can it be said that the Southern Gentile's notorious racial hostility fashioned the attitudes of the newly arrived Jews. The learned *and* virulently racist rabbi James K. Gutheim of New Orleans was not a native Southerner. He came to the South from points north at the ripe age of 33 ready to lead the pro-slavery Confederacy against the "Dictator of Washington," Abraham Lincoln. Shortly after the war, without renouncing his views, he nevertheless served as rabbi at the historic Temple Emanu-El in *New York City*—the flagship congregation of the Reform branch of Judaism and the supposed wellspring of Jewish liberalism. (Today its members

include New York mayor Michael Bloomberg and former governor Eliot Spitzer.) Gutheim's appointment was not even considered controversial. The white supremacist rabbi helped lay the cornerstone of that famous New York synagogue just a couple of years after he defiantly fled New Orleans rather than take the oath of allegiance to the United States. By the time of his death in 1886, Gutheim had become arguably "the most important person in southern Reform Judaism."[341]

That Jews went from espousing a moral code of ethics and righteousness that they say gave religion to the world, to embracing the racist Southern ethos of hate, violence, oppression, slavery, and lynching —with nary a trace of righteous revulsion—is a troubling but unexamined reality of the Black–Jewish relationship. It appears that the centuries of heavy Jewish involvement in the African slave trade, and the centuries more of their Talmudic teachings surrounding the Curse of Ham—the very cornerstone of white supremacy—had fashioned a Judaism entirely compatible with the racist values of the Slave South. "Jews were not aliens in the promised land," wrote Eli Evans, "but blood-and-bones part of the South itself—Jewish Southerners." Jews "belonged to that place."[342]

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336 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," viii, 7; Clive Webb, review of *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity*, by Eric L. Goldstein, *JAH* 93, no. 3 (Dec. 2006): 913. This reasoning is suspect because Russian Jews commonly had Gentile maids and servants, even though the practice and its attendant abuses were a clear source of tensions between the two peoples. Gentile women also had a substantial role in the rearing of Jewish children, so the widespread use of Black mammies in American Jewish households was the continuation of an age-old Jewish practice. See Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog, *Life is with People: The Culture of the Shtetl* (New York: International Univ. Press, 1952; reprint, New York: Schocken Books, 1962), 155-56; Marion A. Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: Women, Family, and Identity in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1991), 26-29, 36-41; and Moshe Aberbach, *Labor, Crafts and*

Commerce in Ancient Israel (Jerusalem: Magnes Press; Hebrew Univ., 1994), 171 n. 870a, who says that in ancient Israel "Female slaves [Gentiles] were sometimes used by their [Jewish] masters for immoral purposes…" He adds (p. 172 n. 884) that "In Babylonia, contempt for slaves reached the point where certain masters… engaged in sexual intercourse with their wives in the presence of both male and female slaves." Also, Israel Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages* (London, 1932), 109-11, 116; Jacob Mann, "The Responsa of the Babylonian Geonim as a Source of Jewish History," *Jewish Quarterly Review,* n.s., 10 (1919): 146-47; Irving A. Agus, *Urban Civilization in Pre-Crusade Europe* (New York: Yeshiva Univ. Press, 1965), 463; and S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza,* vol. 1, *Economic Foundations* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1967), 130-47.

For the use of maids in a Southern context, see Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses*, 18-21; Jacob Rader Marcus, *The American Jewish Woman: A Documentary History* (New York: KTAV, 1981), 174-76; Hertzberg, "Southern Jews and Their Encounter with Blacks," 9. Also, Lee Shai Weissbach discusses the prevalence of Black "servants" in Jewish homes, in *Jewish Life in Small-Town America: A History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2005), 118-19. See also Marcie Cohen Ferris, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005), 120-21; and examples in Gertrude Samet, "Harry Reyner: Individualism and Community in Newport News, Virginia," *SJH* 1 (1998): 113-14, 118, and Ruthe Winegarten and Cathy Schechter, *Deep in the Heart: The Lives and Legends of Texas Jews* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1990), 31. In describing the history of her Texas family, Eva L. Sterne (*The Little Immigrant: A True Story*) writes that when Jaffrey [Jacob Sterne] buys his wife a "darky," he says,

> I've bought a nurse girl for you, Renestine….I felt like a mean creature when I paid the money for that girl, but I knew that we needed a nurse…so what was to be done[?]

The "disappearance" of the "mammy" is lamented by the editors at the *New York Times*—owned by the Jewish, Nashville, Tennessee-bred Ochs family—in "The 'Old Mammy' Market," *NYT,* 9 Jan. 1908, 8.

337 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 7-8. On pages 14-15, Greenberg again refers to Jews, not as racists, but as "adopting middle-class and southern customs [to] help bridge internal divisions within their community and win respectability from Christian society." Jewish "use of house servants [Greenberg won't call them slaves]" was not collaboration with the Black Holocaust, but, rather, Jewish "families emulat[ing] middle-class domestic life."

338 Hyman, *Oleander Odyssey*, 86. See also Isaac Herbert Kempner, "My Memories of Father," *AJA* 19 (April 1967): 43, 59.

339 Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, 104.

340 Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 224, 228, 232-33; Abraham Peck, "That Other 'Peculiar Institution': Jews and Judaism in the

Nineteenth Century South," *Modern Judaism* 7, no. 1 (Feb. 1987): 101-2.

341 Langston, "Interaction and Identity," 92-93; Langston, "James K. Gutheim," 69-70, 78; *NYT*, 1 Nov. 1866, 2. Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, another white supremacist, preached the consecration sermon. See *NYT,* 12 Sept. 1868, 5.

342 Evans, *The Provincials*, ix; Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 237. Also, Herbert Weaver asserts that the idea that "foreigners" had some "moral aversion" to Southern racism is overstated. See his article "Foreigners in Ante-Bellum Towns of the Lower South," *JSoHis* 13, no. 1 (Feb. 1947): 63.

Jews & the Curse of Ham

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition…

—2 Thessalonians 2

One reason that Jews were enthusiastically received in the slave-based South is that they came to Dixie with an almost perfect philosophical pedigree. For long, long before Jews arrived in the South and long before the voyages of Columbus, a virulent racism had become pervasive in the earliest writings of Judaism's most revered sages. The Talmud is a massive collection of rabbinical teachings and commentary passed down orally from generation to generation. It becomes significant in the history of Blacks and Jews when one examines how Black slavery was *morally* justified by the white South using religious arguments—arguments that have direct ideological roots in these ancient rabbinical teachings.

The so-called Curse of Ham (or Hamitic Myth) was derived from the Biblical story of Noah, and it formed the core of the racial belief system among Jewish sages in the centuries before the time of Jesus.[343] As presented in Genesis 9:21-27, the

characters carry no racial identity. But in the later *rabbinical* re-interpretation of this parable a "curse" of blackness was specifically applied to the African.

In the rabbinically revised version Noah's son Ham commits a homosexual act against his drunken father, and for this he and his progeny, the "Black race," are punished everlastingly. The rabbis allege that God's wrath made them black and ugly, and endowed them with thick lips, big red eyes, kinky hair, and elongated penises. The rabbis further allege that God declared that Africans would forever be slaves—"hewers of wood and drawers of water"—to the other races of humankind. Discussing the Jewish invention of this profoundly racist version, the Simon Wiesenthal Center scholar Dr. Harold Brackman wrote:

> [T]here is no denying that the Babylonian Talmud was the first source to read a Negrophobic content into the episode...[344]

In the South, where some divine rationale for slavery and anti-African violence was desperately needed, the rabbis' Curse of Ham legend found a happy philosophical home in almost every Christian denomination.[345] It was deployed most often as a weapon against the increasingly vociferous anti-slavery reformers.[346] If white supremacy was the absolute law of the land, the Hamitic Myth provided the eleventh and most important commandment—for it ordained and reinforced the Southern racial hierarchy. Further, it implied that all Blacks were forever *carriers* of the aberrant behaviors attributed to Noah's progeny and that the other races must guard against such depravity. The Jews, as the "People of the Book," were culturally assumed[347] to be the authority on such Biblical

matters; hence, their presence in Dixie and their willing collaboration with Confederate ethics were an important guide and comfort to Gentiles, helping to confirm the righteousness of their racial crimes.[348]

Prominent American rabbis like New York's Morris Jacob Raphall and many others[349]—following the example of ancient Jewish philosophers such as Moses Maimonides and Judah Halevi—taught that Blacks who refused their God-given station as Ham-cursed slaves were the wicked rejecters of God's commandments who justly deserved white correction.[350] If God supports slavery—to which He has forever condemned Black humanity—they taught, then the destiny of the Black man is to live out his life as a slave and accept this divine punishment willingly. Any Black or white man or woman who repudiates this view contravenes a direct order from God Almighty and thus is considered not only a foe of God but the kin of the devil himself. Indeed, Yiddish-speaking immigrants arrived in America using a common term for the Devil: *der Schwarzer,* the "Black One," or *der schwarze Mann*, "Black Man."[351] This Talmud-inspired belief system became the subtext that drove the "righteous indignation" of every lynch mob and every whip-wielding overseer, every Jim Crow enforcer and every race-baiting politician.

The South's most influential rabbi, founder of Reform Judaism and founder of the only American rabbinical school, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, was passionate about the establishment of the Talmud in American rabbinical training and Jewish religious instruction. He even maintained that the Talmud was the absolute basis of Reform Judaism, the movement he started and the sect of Judaism to which the vast majority of American Jews belong

today:

> [K]nowledge of the Talmud is required to judge and discriminate which reform is legal, Jewish and admissible, and which is contrary; therefore no reform without the Talmud….[T]here can be no reforms within the pale of Judaism without the Talmud.[352]

The Talmud's imprint on the Southern mind, whether conscious or unconscious, can not be ignored. The pioneering efforts of Rabbi Wise and his many American followers disallow the claim that the ancient writings of the Talmudic rabbis were left back in Europe or ignored by the immigrants. The first truly Jewish settlement in the United States, fully inspired by the Jews' biblical identity as "God's chosen people," was, revealingly, a Southern plantation based entirely on the forced labor of enslaved Africans. Pilgrimage Plantation was established in 1823 by the "deeply religious" Moses Elias Levy, who "acquired" 100,000 acres of Indian land[353] in Florida and used 1,000 acres of it as an "asylum" for Jews "who are denied a place of rest in Europe." The son of a wealthy and influential Jewish family, Levy became a prosperous merchant while imbibing the Judaism of Europe. His vision for a Jewish homeland based on Black slavery gained the support of the Warburgs, the infamous German banking family, one member of whom provided backing and even managed the plantation. Levy and the cadre of Jews he inspired were "perfectly willing to utilize slave labor." He had even arranged a deal with the notorious Rhode Island slave trader James De Wolf[354] to obtain "40 or 50 negroes" for quick resale. As many as 31 Africans were enslaved to produce for Levy's

"sacred cause" a range of crops that included sugar, molasses, corn, rice, beans, and peas.[355] Thus, the Talmudic authorization of Jewish and Gentile slave-trading was appreciatively accepted in an America so dependent on the African. Unfortunately, Blacks in America found themselves in daily struggle against the deep-rooted Jewish influences in their lives.

In summary, Jews in the South faced no social, religious, or political disabilities and anti-Semitism was virtually nonexistent. They reciprocated the white Gentiles' philo-Semitism and reinforced the customs of race hatred directed at the Black African. By the 20th century, the Jews enjoyed full membership in white Southern society by their own fervent desire. Their Judaism was refashioned to emphasize the primacy of white skin in accordance with the dictates of white supremacy. Reform Judaism, for Southern Jews, became the historical junction where racial, religious, cultural, and national veins of Judaism—driven by economic imperatives—coalesced into a cohesive force never before seen in the Jewish diaspora. In fact, Jews held a certain proprietary interest in Southern society, having helped forge its economic and ideological foundations, and as such they demanded and received full access to all the benefits of their God-given whiteness.[356]

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343 See for instance Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1968), 17-19; Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews,* vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909), 168-70; Brackman, "Race," chap. 3 in "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 69-161, esp. 80-83; Jonathan Schorsch, "Early Modern Sephardim and Blacks: Contact and Conflict between Two Minorities," in *Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry: From the Golden Age of Spain to Modern Times*, ed. Zion Zohar (New York: New York Univ. Press, 2005), 240-43ff; J.G. St. Clair Drake, *Black Folk Here and There: An Essay in History and Anthropology,* vol. 2 (Los Angeles: Univ. of California, Center for Afro-American Studies, 1990), 12–31, 310-19

notes; J. G. St. Clair Drake, “African Diaspora and Jewish Diaspora: Convergence and Divergence,” in *Jews in Black Perspectives: A Dialogue,* ed. Joseph R. Washington (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. Press, 1984), 28.

344 Brackman, “The Ebb and Flow of Conflict,” 80; Genesis (Noach) 36:6-7 in *Midrash Rabbah,* eds. Rabbi Dr. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon (London: Soncino Press, 1977), 2:292-93; Sanhedrin 108b in *The Babylonian Talmud,* pt. 4, *Nezikin*, vol. 3 (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 745. See an early account of a Jewish use of the Hamitic Myth against “Africans” in a legal land dispute argued before Alexander the Great. Sanhedrin 91a, ibid., 608-10. Also Jonathan Schorsch, “Explorations in the Cross-Cultural Genealogy of the Curse of Ham,” chap. 7 in “Jews and Blacks in the Early Modern Mediterranean and Atlantic Worlds, 1450–1800” (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Berkeley, 2000), 418-70 and appendix; Werner Sollors, *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997), 86-87.

345 Thomas F. Pettigrew, *Epitaph for Jim Crow* (New York: Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, 1964), 15.

346 See for instance Willard M. Swartley, *Slavery, Sabbath, War, and Women: Case Issues in Biblical Interpretation* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1983), 31ff.

347 Indeed, Gentiles perceived Southern Jews as “personal friend[s] of the prophets.” See Hagedorn, “Jews and the American South,” 102. Also, Langston, “Interaction and Identity,” 89-90. According to Ruth Scheinberg, the Jewish people were often looked upon as “living witnesses of the Word or even as authorities on Hebrew and the Old Testament.” See Scheinberg, “The Pekl,” 41; Harry Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer* (Cleveland: World, 1963), 42. Some Christians assumed Jews to be “masters of Biblical exegesis.” See Morrison, “A Southern Philo-Semite,” 79. One Southern Jew reported he was frequently asked questions about the Bible, and was “often required to settle religious disputes ‘because I was a Jew and they all looked upon me as an authority.’” Dinnerstein, *The Leo Frank Case*, 67-68.

348 The most plausible rationale for the development of the Hamitic Myth is an economic one. Jewish traders of the Middle Ages were active in the early slave trade [see the Radanites, for instance, in *JEncy* (1906), s.v. “commerce”], and at first did not distinguish their victims on the basis of race. Leviticus 25:44-46 justified their involvement in the slave trade. Over time, African slave laborers were seen as more marketable than all others and a premium was placed on their sale. It is very likely that Jewish slave-merchants sought from their clerics some divine sanction to account for this profitable racial preference. The rabbis of the time, also enjoying the financial benefits of the slave trade, distorted the Genesis episode, resulting in the race-based Curse of Ham tale—thus sanctifying the African-centered slave trade. Jewish author Bernard Lewis forcefully argues this in his book *Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1986), 88-89, though he mistakenly attributes the origin of the Curse’s racist

inflection to the Muslim Arabs and not the slave-trading rabbis. It may be significant that the development of the Talmud (the source of the myth) and the introduction of large numbers of African slaves into southern Iraq—many by Jewish traders—occurred almost simultaneously in the third century A.D. Also, Jewish slave-traders often ran afoul of laws restricting the sale of Christian slaves. A slave claiming to be Christian or intending to convert had to be freed or sold only to a Christian, a restriction that "robbed" Jews of their "property" and otherwise complicated Jewish commerce. The Curse of Ham's labeling of all "nonwhites" as pagans (thus deeming them inherently incapable of divine guidance through religious conversion) conveniently nullified this legal restriction. See Solomon Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century* (Philadelphia, 1933), 23-24, who uses the term "rob"; and Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews,* vol. 3 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1957), 30-31. (The term is used within the context of the American South by the Jewish Confederate Isaac Hermann, in his *Memoirs of a Veteran* [Atlanta, 1911], 261.)

Spread far and wide as divine prophecy by the slave merchants and their beneficiaries in the clergy, slavery would ultimately be universally believed to be the lot of the Black African. Through the millennium, the so-called Curse of Ham was easily adopted by all the major religions and has been used liberally whenever circumstances required the aggressive assertion of white supremacy. See Jonathan Schorsch, "Portmanteau Jews: Sephardim and Race in the Early Modern Atlantic World," *Jewish Culture and History* 4, no. 2 (winter 2001): 60.

349 The nation's highest paid clergyman, Rabbi Morris Raphall of New York, defended slavery and claimed God Himself had sanctioned it. See *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, 1:149-50, 293. Wealthy white Jew Emma Mordecai was said to have "cursed" the race of a Black Union soldier who came to liberate her slaves. See Emily Bingham, "American, Jewish, Southern, Mordecai: Constructing Identities To 1865," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 64.

350 The twelfth-century rabbi Moses Maimonides reinforced the racism of the slave trade by instructing his people that Black Africans were "lower than the rank of man but higher than the rank of the apes." See Moses Maimonides, *The Guide to the Perplexed*, trans. and ed. Shlomo Pines (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963), 2:618-19. Other translations use the term "cushites" or "blacks" in place of "Negroes." See M. Friedlander's translation (1904; reprint, New York: Dover, 1956), 384. According to Dr. Harold Brackman, Judah Halevi and Moses Maimonides were "the two greatest thinkers the medieval Jewish world produced," and "virtually the only point" on which they "agree is that Blacks are biologically inferior." See Brackman, "Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 88. The *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Religion* (1965) refers to Moses Maimonides (1135–1204) as "the symbol of the pure and orthodox faith." His book is considered the "greatest work of Jewish religious philosophy." The Anti-Defamation League gives out the Maimonides Award annually to "counteract hatred, prejudice and bigotry." See Brackman, "Ebb and Flow of Conflict,"

88-89. And for a brief history of racialized Jewish thought see Schorsch, "Portmanteau Jews," 59-74. Also, Jonathan Schorsch, *Jews and Blacks in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2004), 347-48 n. 30. Ironically, the notorious anti-Semite Wilhelm Marr also believed that "the Negroes are closer to beasts than to human beings." See Moshe Zimmermann, *Wilhelm Marr: The Patriarch of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), 49.

351 "Speaking of the Devil," *Forward*, 7 June 1996. Those speaking Slavic languages like Polish use the terms *czarno,* meaning "black," and *czart*, meaning "Devil."

352 James G. Heller, *Isaac M. Wise: His Life, Work and Thought* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1965), 541ff. Wise even edited an early English-language version of the Talmud*,* translated by Michael L. Rodkinson and published in 1896.

353 The act of "acquiring Indian land," it must be said, is fraught with bloody implications.

354 See *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 1991), 232-33.

355 Chris Monaco, "A Sugar Utopia on the Florida Frontier: Moses Elias Levy's Pilgrimage Plantation," *SJH* 5 (2002): 103-40. After playing a significant role in introducing the slave-intensive sugar business to Cuba and the United States, Levy actually proposed abolition, though he never freed his own captives. He also proposed that "British convicts" should be transported to the West Indies to be mated with "freed" African women to reduce racial conflict. See Monaco, "A Sugar Utopia on the Florida Frontier," 124; and C.S. Monaco, *Moses Levy of Florida: Jewish Utopian and Antebellum Reformer* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2005), 65, 106-12, 130-43, 153-54. His son, David Levy Yulee, was a vociferous supporter of slavery and an aggressive promoter of Indian removal. He became Florida's first U.S. senator and the first Jewish senator in American history.

356 Hasia Diner, "Entering the Mainstream of Modern Jewish History: Peddlers and the American Jewish South," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil,* 102-3.

Jewish Political Power in the Apartheid South

An important measure of societal acceptance of any ethnic group is the number of individuals among that group who have risen to positions of authority and political power. It is the most direct gauge of the trust placed in them by the larger citizenry and is the only indicator that can be measured by actual poll results. At the same time, it is a measure of the extent to which that ethnic group has imbibed the values of the larger society and accepted its mores, beliefs, attitudes, and idiosyncrasies.[357]

Without question, Jews, though a tiny portion of the white population—one-half of one percent (one of every 200 white Southerners was Jewish)—became significant players in the Southern economy, giving them a level of affluence that is astonishing when compared with that of any other ethnic group. They had amassed more wealth in the American South—the very heart of world racism—than any subgroup of white Southerners.[358] As Jewish scholar Alfred Hero explained,

> Jews throughout the South have been on the average better off, better educated, more concentrated in elevated social and occupational groups, and more urban than gentiles…[359]

Therefore Jews were that segment of the

population with the most to lose if any change occurred socially, economically, politically, and especially racially. As significant beneficiaries, Jews were often found supporting, financing, leading, and defending the Southern slavery/Jim Crow system.

Jews of the South point with pride to the many of their coreligionists who rose rapidly and easily to the heights of political power. Priscilla Fishman was one of many Jewish scholars who agreed that "[i]t was quite usual for a Jew…to become a mayor or a leading official of a frontier town."[360] Jews routinely held the offices of congressman, senator, and state legislator as well as mayorships, governorships, and judgeships; moreover, literally scores of municipal officials all throughout the South were Jewish. The notorious Jim Crow cities of Montgomery, Mobile, Atlanta, Memphis, and Durham, at one time or another, had Jewish mayors. Though they were a tiny minority everywhere they settled in the South, Jews were so civically active that some places established "Jewish seats" on school boards and city councils.[361]

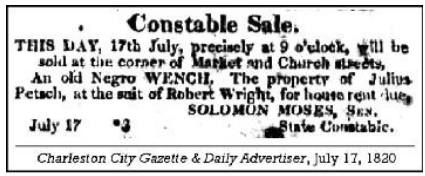
Such political aspirations in the "New World" were a relatively new phenomenon in the history of the Jewish diaspora, a history that is characterized by a marked reluctance among Jews to vie for political positions in the areas they settled. In fact, Jews sometimes pointedly worked out settlement agreements and treaties in which they themselves stipulated that they would not have to participate in the political affairs of the Gentiles. In the profitable slavery-based outpost of colonial Jamaica, for example, Jews had been "content" to "avoid open conflict by studiously avoiding politics," according to scholars.[362] Their operational philosophy was based not on the fear of anti-Semitism, but on the

understanding that the mastery of commerce—and not the vote—represented the preeminent power in the emerging capitalism of the New World.

In the American South Jews saw advantages to being involved in the region's politics, since political or social unrest could affect their commercial aspirations in a very fundamental way. Their business operations in Europe had been disrupted by a hodgepodge of political edicts, decrees, and enactments in various times and places, so they actively sought to secure their civil rights in their hypertolerant New World environs. Whatever their motives, the Jews' prominent presence as *lawmakers* in a region notorious for its *legal* strangulation of the Black population is no less extraordinary than finding a Jewish presence in the upper echelons of the Nazi party.[363]

Jewish office-holding in the South was common, occurring regularly long before the Civil War. In Charleston, South Carolina, alone, the following Jews[364] were officially responsible for law enforcement tasks that included the apprehension and punishment of Black people who wanted freedom more than slavery:

[illegible]	Gaoler of Jail
[illegible]	Deputy Sheriff
[illegible]	[illegible] Solomon
[illegible]	[illegible] Marshal
[illegible]	[illegible] Hart
[illegible]	[illegible] Moses
[illegible]	[illegible] Hyams
[illegible]	Deputy Sheriff
[illegible]	[illegible] Moses, Jr.
[illegible]	[illegible] Levy



Constable Sale.

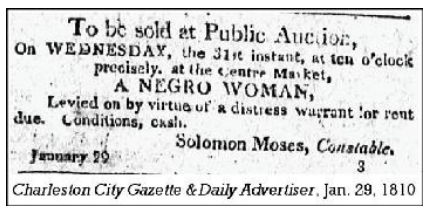
THIS DAY, 17th July, precisely at 9 o'clock, will be sold at the corner of Market and Church streets, An old Negro WENCH, The property of Julius Petsch, at the suit of Robert Wright, for house rent due.

SOLOMON MOSES, Sen.
State Constable.

July 17 *3

Charleston City Gazette & Daily Advertiser, July 17, 1820

Mordecai Sheftall, Jr., served as police chief in Savannah, Georgia, between 1849 and 1851. Savannah's other Jewish officials included judges Levi S. D'Lyon (1838–1845 and 1861–1863) and Mordecai Sheftall, Sr. (1847–1851), five sheriffs, and five clerks. Part of their sworn duties included "the regulation of slaves and freemen."[365] Similarly, the political activities of Florida senator David Yulee and Louisiana's Judah P. Benjamin, among others, distinctly thwarted Black freedom. Long after the Civil War, Jews continued to hold office. For example, at least twelve Jews held elective or appointive office in Atlanta between 1874 and 1911—considerable representation for a group that never exceeded 3 percent of the total population.[366]



To be sold at Public Auction,
On WEDNESDAY, the 31st instant, at ten o'clock precisely, at the Centre Market,
A NEGRO WOMAN,
Levied on by virtue of a distress warrant for rent due. Conditions, cash.

Solomon Moses, *Constable.*

January 29 3

Charleston City Gazette & Daily Advertiser, Jan. 29, 1810

It should be reiterated that these Jews were not rogues, outcasts, or disgruntled converts, but well-respected leaders of their own Jewish communities, important officials in their synagogues, and open practitioners of their faith—in full view of their Gentile neighbors. Jewish candidates were voted into office by their fellow white Gentile citizens, often winning their posts over Gentile opponents. And a vote for a Jew was not a "protest" vote

against the prevailing public policies. Voters fully expected their Jewish mayors and other officials to *strengthen* white supremacy—not to destroy it. Just as an official of the Nazi German government was considered the best Nazi in the land, expected to uphold Hitler's every command, Jewish public servants in the American South took oaths to uphold all the laws of their state, and convinced the electorate that they could be trusted to perform this role better and more efficiently than any of the other candidates. In other words, an elected officeholder in the Jim Crow South was more than a trusted politician: he was the best white supremacist in the land.[367]

History tells us that Southern Gentiles firmly believed they made sound choices.[368] Harry Golden put it this way:

> The political influence of the individual small-town Southern Jew is astonishing, not only on the local level but also on the level of state and national politics. It is based on personal prestige rather than the power of the "Jewish vote," and is often greater than that of whole communities of Jews in the large cities.[369]

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357 Mark I. Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity in Nineteenth-Century America: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830-1880" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Florida, 1997), 220. Greenberg confirmed, for example, that "Savannahians generally admitted into their organizations and political offices only men and women who adopted local cultural patterns." Melvin I. Urofsky, preface to *"Turn to the South": Essays on Southern Jewry,* eds. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1979), xii.

358 Rowena Olegario, "'That Mysterious People': Jewish Merchants, Transparency, and Community in Mid-Nineteenth Century America," *Business History Review* 73, no. 2 (summer 1999):

187; Benjamin Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger: A Study of Jewish Life in the Small Community* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), 121, 123; Richard L. Zweigenhaft, *Jews in the Protestant Establishment* (New York: Praeger, 1982), 10; John Higham, *Send These to Me: Jews and Other Immigrants in Urban America* (New York: Atheneum, 1975), 144, 164-65; Nathan Glazer, "The American Jew and the Attainment of Middle-Class Rank: Some Trends and Explanations," in *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, ed. Marshall Sklare (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1958); Leonard Dinnerstein and David M. Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), 155-59.

359 Alfred Hero quoted in Eli N. Evans, *The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 321.

360 Fishman quoted in *Entrepreneurship and Self-Help Among Black Americans: A Reconsideration of Race and Economics*, by John Sibley Butler (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1991), 20.

361 Mark K. Bauman, "A Multithematic Approach to Southern Jewish History," in *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America*, ed. Marc Lee Raphael (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2008), 271.

362 Samuel J. Hurwitz and Edith Hurwitz, "The New World Sets an Example for the Old: The Jews of Jamaica and Political Rights, 1661-1831," *AJHQ* 55 (1965-66): 43. For the extensive economic activities of Jamaican Jews, see Allan D. Meyers, "Ethnic Distinctions and Wealth among Colonial Jamaican Merchants, 1685-1716," *Social Science History* 22, no. 1 (spring 1998).

363 In fact, the extensive involvement of Jews in slavery and Jim Crow-era politics presaged the stunning revelation that there were indeed Jews who allied themselves with Adolf Hitler and collaborated with him in promoting his anti-Jewish policies. The *Judenrat,* or Jewish Councils, were made up of Jews who governed their own communities on behalf of the Nazi authorities and assisted the Nazis in selecting Jews for shipment to the death camps. Jews who resisted faced the Jewish *Judenrat* militia, who hunted down their fellow Jews to deliver them to the Nazis' concentration camps, where—at least in one known case—a Jew was the executioner. See Isaiah Trunk, *Judenrat: The Jewish Councils in Eastern Europe Under Nazi Occupation* (New York: Macmillan, 1972) and W. Glicksman, "Social Differentiation in the German Concentration Camps," in *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* (New York, 1953), 8:145-48. In the concentration camps, Jewish inmates called *kapos* functioned as spies and snitches and collaborated with Nazi death camp authorities. At least 77 Jews achieved the rank of officer in Hitler's Nazi regime. See Bryan Mark Rigg, *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers: The Untold Story of Nazi Racial Laws and Men of Jewish Descent in the German Military* (Lawrence, KS: Univ. Press of Kansas, 2002). Douglas A. Blackmon, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Slavery By Another Name* (2008), pointed out the parallels between post-slavery Black-labor camps in America and the concentration camps of Hitler's Germany: "[L]abor camp is almost a misnomer—these were places that much more so resembled a German death camp during World War II….

[These forced labor camps] were everywhere…[T]hey occurred all over the South." See Douglas Blackmon, "Slavery by Another Name," interview by Tom Ashbrook, *On Point*, June 3, 2009, http// www.onpointradio.org. Gentile *and Jewish* officeholders maintained these American concentration camps.

364 Bertram W. Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865," *PAJHS* 50, no. 3 (March 1961): 164; Bertram Wallace Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 103, 296; Joseph R. Rosenbloom, *A Biographical Dictionary of Early American Jews: Colonial Times through 1800* (Lexington, KY: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1960), 55, 122; Ira Rosenwaike, "The Jewish Population of the United States as Estimated from the Census of 1820," in *The Jewish Experience in America: Selected Studies from the Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, ed. Abraham J. Karp (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 2:18; *EJ* (1972), s.v. "Charleston"; Barnett A. Elzas, *The Jews of South Carolina: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (Philadelphia, 1905); Stephen M. Passamaneck, "Morris Goldsmith: Deputy United States Marshal," *AJA* 46, no. 1 (spring/summer 1994): 63, 96 n. 14. For a comprehensive overview of the slave laws Jewish officials enforced, see Harlan Greene, Harry S. Hutchins, Jr., and Brian E. Hutchins, *Slave Badges and the Slave-Hire System in Charleston, South Carolina, 1783-1865* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2004), 13-66, 81-102, specific 1840 reference to "Marshal Solomon Moses," 115.

365 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 245 n. 54, 246-47.

366 Steven Hertzberg, "The Jewish Community of Atlanta: From the End of the Civil War until the Eve of the Frank Case," *AJHQ* 62, no. 3 (March 1973): 267.

367 For example, the citizens of Selma, Alabama, a notorious hotbed of Southern racism—the veritable "Auschwitz of the South"—voted a Jew into the mayoral office three times. See Clive Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations in the American South, 1790-1970" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Cambridge, 1997), 130; Stanley Lieberson, *A Piece of the Pie: Blacks and White Immigrants Since 1880* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1980), 88-90.

368 Raymond Arsenault, "Charles Jacobson of Arkansas: A Jewish Politician in the Land of the Razorbacks, 1891-1915," in *"Turn to the South": Essays on Southern Jewry,* eds. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1979), 56. "[T]he careers carved out by Southern-Jewish politicians stand as important testaments to the fact that many turn-of-the-century Southerners remained relatively tolerant in their attitudes towards Jews."

369 Harry L. Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South: Segregation at Sundown," *Commentary,* Nov. 1955, 404. Louis Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (spring 1978), 43: "There were no signs of political discrimination" and "[a]s for social ostracism, there is little evidence of it." Jews in large cities also achieved this level of political influence. See Steven Hertzberg, "Southern Jews and Their Encounter

with Blacks: Atlanta, 1850-1915," *Atlanta Historical Journal* 23 (1979): 8.

A Review of Jewish Political Power in the Jim Crow South

We want the government of the United States to exempt our people from ALL taxation as long as we are deprived of equal justice under the laws of the land.

—The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad

In the Reconstruction era between 1865 and 1877, Blacks—under the protection of the federal government—achieved political positions in many Southern states.[370] And having gained the ability to legislate, they made extraordinary strides in promoting education and equality and even in eliminating "legal reflections of anti-Semitism" where they existed.[371] Blacks emerging from chattel slavery were eager to exercise all their newly established political rights to improve their collective condition, and they braved the white-hooded mobs of ex-Confederates to vote for a new political reality. Whites, however, worked tirelessly to undermine these efforts, and by the turn of the 20th century Black political progress had been violently wiped out by the wave of "white

supremacy" campaigns that swept every Southern state.

Black progress was not part of the Jewish political agenda in those years, but there was plenty of documented Jewish collaboration with those who plotted to extinguish Black political aspirations.[372] In **Alabama**, Rabbi Israel I. Jones, leader of Mobile's Jewish community in the mid-1800s, placed ads for the sale of Black human beings in the city newspaper. He served on the city council and briefly served as acting mayor.[373] Between 1875 and 1881, Mordecai Moses served 3 terms as mayor of Montgomery, where almost a century later Mrs. Rosa Parks was *legally* thrown off a city bus, sparking the Civil Rights Movement. The local newspaper proudly depicted Moses as the candidate of "the white men of Montgomery," while denigrating his opponent as a friend of the Blacks—Moses won in a landslide. Ultimately, he was credited with having "played a major role in developing Montgomery," a city with one of the most racist and violent histories in the South.[374] The American Jewish Historical Society has even called a Jewish man named Old Mordecai "the founder of the city of Montgomery."[375]

As a member and the president of Birmingham's Board of Education in 1884–1904, Samuel Ullman created and oversaw the city's racially segregated "colored" school system, all the while serving as the lay-rabbi at the synagogue and as a B'nai B'rith official. The curriculum for whites (beyond the three Rs) included Latin, history, geology, astronomy, rhetoric, physiology, and algebra, while education for Blacks focused solely on "manual training." Ullman was joined on the school board by fellow Jews I.R. Hochstadter, B. Steiner, and B.M. Jacobs (who also served as president). Their

educational goals for Blacks clearly did not include preparing them to become "merchants, bankers, educators, lawyers and political and civic leaders," as a synagogue pamphlet boasted *Jews* were in the city.

In 1899, Ullman argued for "improved" education for Blacks, but only because, he said, "nearly all our domestic help are colored, and as such are in daily contact with our children…" Thus, he saw Black progress in terms of Blacks' servitude to Jews, considering it necessary only if it would enhance the growth and development of Jewish children. His *segregated* "colored" educational agenda "persisted well into the twentieth century."[376]

According to Brandeis scholar Raymond Arsenault, the list of **Arkansas** Jews who were either elected to public office or appointed to positions of public authority during this Southern Jewish Golden Age "is surprisingly long."[377] Rabbi James A. Wax affirmed that "[i]n Arkansas alone, thirteen towns have been named after Jews" and that for many years Jews "have been elected to public office as well as positions of leadership in private organizations."[378]

Florida was the home of one Sen. David Yulee (who changed his surname from Levy), the first Jewish senator in America and possibly the most vociferous pro-slavery and anti-Indian Jew in American history. Yulee City and Levy County—where the infamous Rosewood massacre of innocent Blacks took place in 1923—are named in his honor.[379] According to historians, Yulee "represented the views of the white, Southern agricultural plantation system, first against the Seminole Indians and later against the Union." Both he and his father, Moses Elias Levy, owned sugar

plantations and enslaved many Black Africans.[380]

Since the Civil War, at least 67 Jews have served as mayors in the deep Southern state of Florida, most during the era of Jim Crow law. As further evidence of their acceptance in the Gentile South, a Miami Jew became president of that city's Merchants Association in 1896. By the end of that year, Jews owned 12 of 16 clothing stores in Miami when there were only 25 Jews in the whole city. And this, at the very same time the state's legislature declared unconstitutional the 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution of the United States—amendments according Blacks basic citizenship rights.[381]

Jews in **Georgia**, wrote Dr. Mark I. Greenberg,

> exerted influence beyond their numbers. In 1860, for example, the Irish outnumbered Jews nearly seven to one in Savannah, yet no Irishmen sat with Solomon Cohen on council that year.[382]

In one county, wrote Louis Schmier, "it was axiomatic that a leader of the Jewish community would sit on the board of aldermen and later on the city council."[383] David Mayer helped to create Atlanta's public school system and served on the board of education from 1869 until his death in 1890. He was the very same strongly pro-Confederate David Mayer, who by 1859 had amassed a fortune of $59,000 and enslaved six Black human beings.[384]

After the Civil War Georgia still proved hospitable to the white "People of the Book," with Atlanta having the largest population of Jews of any city in the South. Jewish upward mobility was described as "more striking in Atlanta than in most

northern cities,"[385] and Jews routinely held public office in this ultra-Christian region. In 1875, Aaron Haas became Atlanta's first mayor *pro tempore*. In the 1880s, at least four Jews were elected to city councils; one was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives. Scholar Mark K. Bauman maintains that of all the immigrant groups of Atlanta, the German Jewish community particularly "exerted power beyond its size so that it wielded considerable political influence and preferment." Jews were partners in Gentile law firms, they sat on grand juries, and they became officials in chambers of commerce. As many as 35 percent of Masons and many of the highest officers in the Masonic order were Jews.[386]

As elsewhere in the South, Atlanta Jews applied their extraordinary political and economic power in support of the racial status quo. In 1906—the same year that a vicious anti-Black riot erupted in the city—a Jewish member of the Carnegie Library Board voted to deny Black patrons access to the library.[387] The O.H. Silverman Co. building was the "meeting place" and "headquarters" for the white gangs and militia that plotted the 1906 Atlanta massacre of as many as 40 innocent Blacks and probably many more. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum confirms that the Nazi regime forced Jews "to carry identity cards that indicated their Jewish heritage," with all "Jewish passports" stamped with an identifying letter "J".[388] Atlanta industrialist and school board member Oscar Pappenheimer had a remarkably similar plan for all Southern Blacks:

> I propose the registration of negroes in the southern states 14 years of age and more….Each person so registered should possess….a certificate…in which should

> be entered description, date and place of birth and, at each registration, record of abode, employment, conduct and reference. With proper precaution against possible exchange, these certificates would before long be of great value to industrious, well-behaved people. Let others decide whether it be legal to pass laws bearing on this subject with reference to the colored race only…

Pappenheimer said he wanted his law to target "trashy…thoughtless, shiftless negro[es]."[389] And these kinds of acts of Jewish racism "were not isolated incidents."[390]

The Jewish community of **Louisiana** might be considered the anchor of the Jewish South. It is in this severely depressed Mississippi River Delta region that the Black population has always overwhelmed the white—in some sections they were 90 percent of the total population. And it is the place where Jews experienced the greatest economic, social, and political prominence. Though Jews constituted only two percent of the state's white population, no other state had such a high proportion of Jews in public life.[391] Rabbi Bertram Korn wrote that the Jews in New Orleans experienced "large-scale acceptance…in almost every nook and cranny of social, political, and cultural life…"[392]

Rabbi James K. Gutheim of New Orleans openly defended the Confederacy and the enslavement of Blacks.[393] When he died in 1886, the legislature adjourned in his honor, as did the courts and the commercial exchanges, and his pallbearers included the governor and the New Orleans mayor. It was the "greatest demonstration of respect ever shown

to a Jew in the United States."[394]

Samuel Goldstein was considered "the driving force" behind the creation of the strictly segregated public school system in Shreveport. His son Elias was a partner in that Jim Crow city's largest law firm.[395] In the New Orleans school district named for the Jewish pro-slavery icon Judah P. Benjamin, the only school was for whites only, despite the fact that only 77 of the 1,292 school-age children in the district were white.[396]

Jews enjoyed remarkable acceptance in **Mississippi**, with at least 22 Jewish men having served as mayors. In Natchez, Mississippi, 13 Jews served as city aldermen; the president of the Natchez Board of Trade was Henry Frank, a Jew; and Isaac Lowenburg, the first Jewish mayor of Natchez (1883–1886), was said to have amassed a great deal of land throughout the South. Jews were only five percent of Natchez's population but they owned a third of the city's businesses.[397]

When Hattiesburg school officials proposed in October 1907 that separate quarters be erected for Italian, Syrian, and Jewish children, the Jewish press speedily declared:

> The most strenuous efforts should be made to prevent so dangerous an innovation being made into the school system of this country. To deprive children of the natural links which bind them to their fellow-citizens during the school years, is the most serious restriction on their rights.[398]

And yet the state's own school report of 1873 acknowledged objections to the idea that "a general tax compels white men…to educate the children of

the Negro." Though Blacks voraciously sought education where they could find it, the all-important post-slavery labor system was totally dependent on the maintenance of Black ignorance; hence missionary teachers were tortured and murdered in Mississippi, and the churches and rude country shacks that housed Black schools were burned to the ground. Jewish Confederate veteran Isaac Hermann believed that these schools were established "to inculcate into [the negroes'] minds all sorts of deviltry, embittering their feelings against their former owners and lifelong friends…"[399] Some counties could boast of having destroyed *all* the schools for the Black former slaves.[400] Nonetheless, a board member of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience looked at this Mississippi history and concluded,

> The more I learn about the roles Jews played in Mississippi's development, the more important I feel it is to preserve this heritage. The general public needs to know about the instrumental part Jews played.[401]

When Pres. Rutherford B. Hayes—the man whose election ended the promise of American citizenship for Blacks—visited Nashville, **Tennessee**, in 1877, the Jewish business houses of Fishel Bros., D. Lovemenn, and Rosenheim Bros. "were among those gaily decorated for the procession of the presidential party."[402] A presidential visit by Grover Cleveland in 1887 was deemed a great occasion by local Jews. Cleveland believed that only white Americans "were capable of appreciating the greatness of the American past and providing leadership for its future." It was a mistake, he thought, for Abraham Lincoln to have

given Blacks the rights of citizenship. Nonetheless, several Jews formed his reception committee, including Ben Herman, Louis Lebeck, Joseph Lindauer, George Rosenheim, L. Rosenheim, William Sulzbacher, and Mesdames Julius and Max Sax.[403]

And when the government unleashed its racist fury, as in one case in 1919, Jews seemed willing to assist. Blacks in Knoxville, Tennessee, were met with army machine guns "posted on the roof of one Jewish building as tensions flared between white rioters and black residents..."[404]

Jews were instrumental in turning the rugged **Texas** frontier into a bustling whites-only metropolis. Despite its blood-drenched history of conflict with the Mexicans, ethnic cleansing of the Indians, and enslavement of the Africans, Dallas was seen as no less than the Jewish Emerald City. According to Irving Goldberg, the historical role of Dallas Jews shows a "tradition" as "civic leaders" contributing heavily to "the opera, the symphony, the theater, the Chamber of Commerce, civic clubs of all descriptions..."[405]

Texas Jews served in both houses of the state's all-white legislature and held elective office wherever they settled.[406] Leon Jacobs served as president of his local school board and in the early 1920s helped direct the construction of "a nice brick [segregated] school for the black children near the old Luling Jewish Cemetery." Dr. Bryan Edward Stone reminds us that "Texas Jews as a group never identified with them [Blacks] or defined themselves as a persecuted minority."[407]

By the Civil War **Virginia** Jews were established members of the white social, political, and economic order. Jew Solomon Jacobs was acting mayor of Richmond at a time when "No free

negroes were allowed to reside within the limits of the city without such permission." In short order Jews had become "integral" to "every activity of the town, county, and state; in government, industry, professions, business."[408] Isaac Iseman "was not only the manager of his plantations and former slaves, but also the postmaster and general storekeeper at Spotsylvania Court House," and "the only Jew within a radius of many miles."[409] The rabbi in Norfolk "pressed for the prosecution of blacks for violating the Jim Crow laws."[410]

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370 Louisiana discouraged Black political activism by requiring Blacks to post a bond of thousands of dollars just to occupy an elective office. The intention was to force the Black candidate to find a white sponsor to post the bond and thus take responsibility for (i.e., control) him. Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977; reprint, New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 64. In Mississippi, J. Milton Brown posted a total of $91,000—furnished by four white men—for all four of the offices he held.

371 W.E.B. Du Bois, "Reconstruction and Its Benefits," *American Historical Review* 15, no. 4 (July 1910): 781-99. Also, Herbert Aptheker, *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States,* vol. 2 (1951; reprint, New York: Citadel Press, 1966), 566; Morris U. Schappes, *The Jews in the United States: A Pictorial History, 1654 to the Present* (New York: Citadel Press, 1958), 50-52; Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 1 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 80. There was some anti-Jewish legislation on the books in America, but it was never actually enforced. For example, Leonard Rogoff, "Is the Jew White? The Racial Place of the Southern Jew," *AJH* 85, no. 3 (1997), 230 n. 14: "Although as a Jew he [Jacob Henry] was constitutionally disqualified from public office, he was allowed to take a seat in the North Carolina state legislature in 1809." Also, Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010), 81.

372 The anti-Jewish laws applied in the Jewish Holocaust were considered so egregious that the claim that a soldier "was only following orders" was disallowed as a legitimate defense in the Nuremburg Trials. There is scant evidence of Jews disobeying Jim Crow laws in protest of their immorality in the era between the Civil War and the mid-twentieth century.

373 *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 1991), 254; Steven Leonard Jacobs, "Mobile's Jewish Community," *Encyclopedia of Alabama,* 2008, http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1878.

374 Kenneth Libo, "The Moseses of Montgomery: The Saga of a

Jewish Family in the South," *Alabama Heritage,* Spring 1995, 20-22; Mary Stanton, "At One with the Majority," *SJH* 9 (2006): 150-51.

375 A.J. Messing, Jr., "'Old Mordecai'—The Founder of the City of Montgomery," *PAJHS* 13 (1905): 71-81. Old Mordecai was allegedly beaten and had his left ear cut off by Indians because of his "fraternization" with an Indian woman. Bertram Wallace Korn, "The Jews of Mobile, Alabama, Prior to the Organization of the First Congregation, in 1841," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, vols. 40-41 (1969-70): 472-73.

376 Mark H. Elovitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie: The Birmingham Experience* (University, AL: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1974), 37, 41, 48, 74. Ullman is posed as a friend to Blacks in Lynne B. Feldman, *A Sense of Place: Birmingham's Black Middle-Class Community, 1890-1930* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1999), 115, 117, 120-21, 136; Robert G. Corley, *Paying "Civic Rent": The Jews of Emanu-El and the Birmingham Community* (Birmingham: A.H. Cather, 1982); Carl V. Harris, "Stability and Change in Discrimination Against Black Public Schools: Birmingham, Alabama, 1871-1931," *JSoHis* 51, no. 3 (Aug. 1985): 403; Margaret E. Armbrester, *Samuel Ullman and "Youth": The Life, the Legacy* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1993), 31-43.

377 Raymond Arsenault, "Charles Jacobson of Arkansas: A Jewish Politician in the Land of the Razorbacks, 1891-1915," in *"Turn to the South,"* 58; Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s–1990s* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994), passim.

378 James A. Wax, "The Attitude of the Jews in the South Toward Integration," *CCAR Journal,* June 1959, 16. Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson, eds., *Jews in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1973), 9, state that anti-Semitism "did not prevent the Jews from attaining a high standing in southern communities." This, despite Arkansas having passed the "Free Negro Expulsion Act of 1859," which banned free Blacks or mixed-race ("mulatto") people from the state and sentenced violators to slavery. Also Wax, "The Attitude of the Jews in the South," 27; Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 2 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 64ff.

379 Rosewood whites murdered as many as one hundred Black citizens and seized all their property—yet the event is nearly invisible in American history. Michael D'Orso, *Like Judgment Day: The Ruin and Redemption of a Town Called Rosewood* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1996), 84, 188.

380 Henry Alan Green and Marcia Kerstein Zerivitz, *MOSAIC: Jewish Life in Florida* (Coral Gables, FL: MOSAIC, 1991), 9-12, 23 n. 26. Yulee, as president of the Florida Railroad Co., owed $750,000 to a New York firm and supported secession, in part, because he believed severing Florida's connection to the Union would wipe out this debt. See Federal Writers' Project of the Work Projects Administration, *Florida: A Guide to the Southernmost State* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1939), 348; Joseph Gary Adler, "Moses Elias Levy and Attempts to Colonize Florida," in *Jews of the South: Selected*

Essays from the Southern Jewish Historical Society, eds. Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1984), 17-29; Leon Hühner, "Moses Elias Levy: An Early Pioneer and the Father of Florida's First Senator," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 19 (April 1941): 319-45; C.S. Monaco, *Moses Levy of Florida: Jewish Utopian and Antebellum Reformer* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2005); Chris Monaco, "A Sugar Utopia on the Florida Frontier: Moses Elias Levy's Pilgrimage Plantation," *SJH* 5 (2002): 103-40; David Max Eichhorn, *Jewish Folklore in America* (Middle Village, NY: J. David Publishers, 1996), 174-80; Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, *A Jewish Tourist's Guide to the U.S.*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, 1954), 114-16.

381 Green and Zerivitz, *MOSAIC: Jewish Life in Florida,* 13-15, 22; Charlton W. Tebeau, *Synagogue in the Central City: Temple Israel of Greater Miami, 1922-1972* (Coral Gables, FL: Univ. of Miami Press, 1972), 23-24, 33; Irving Lehrman and Joseph Rappaport, *The Jewish Community of Miami Beach* (New York: American Jewish History Center of the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1950), 7. For examples of anti-Black racism in Florida, see Jerrell H. Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet: Florida in the Era of Reconstruction, 1863-1877* (Gainesville, FL: Univ. Presses of Florida, 1974), 40-43; *Washington Post*, 9 May 1907, 11.

382 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 247.

383 Louis Schmier, ed., *Reflections of Southern Jewry: The Letters of Charles Wessolowsky, 1878-1879* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1982), 17.

384 ISJL, "Atlanta, Georgia." The Institute of Southern Jewish Life presents Mayer's slave ownership as proof of his industriousness. ($59,000 in 1859 had the same purchasing power as $1.57 million today.)

385 Albert S. Lindemann, *The Jew Accused* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 230; Barry R. Chiswick, "Jewish Immigrant Skill and Occupational Attainment at the Turn of the Century," *Explorations in Economic History* 28 (Jan. 1991): 77-78.

386 Mark K. Bauman, "Jewish Community of Atlanta," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, March 15, 2004, http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org: "Jews routinely held seats on the aldermanic board, the school board, and in the state legislature." The German Jewish community of Atlanta serves, Bauman says, "as a case study of Southern urban political dynamics that were evident in Memphis, New Orleans, Savannah, and other cities." See his "Factionalism and Ethnic Politics in Atlanta: German Jews from the Civil War through the Progressive Era," in *Politics and Religion in the White South*, ed. Glenn Feldman (Lexington, KY: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2005), 35-37; also Mark K. Bauman, "The Youthful Musings of a Jewish Community Activist: Josephine Joel Heyman," *Atlanta History* 39, no. 2 (summer 1995): 47; Helen Jacobus Apte, *Heart of a Wife: The Diary of a Southern Jewish Woman*, ed. Marcus D. Rosenbaum (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1998), 67. Jews "did not face significant discrimination" in Atlanta, writes Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 231, 230. Also, see Schmier, "The First Jews of Valdosta," 43; Arnold Shankman, "Atlanta Jewry—1900–1930," *AJA* 25, no. 2 (Nov. 1973): 131-32.

387 W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Opening of the Library," *The Independent,* vol. 54 (New York, 1902), 809-10. Du Bois recounts the meeting with the trustees of the Atlanta library thus:

> …the chairman, leaning forward, said: "I should like to ask you a question: Do you not think that allowing whites and negroes to use this library would be fatal to its usefulness?"
>
> There come at times words linked together which seem to chord in strange recurring resonance with words of other ages and one hears the voice of many centuries and wonders which century is speaking. As I sat there I was for a moment not sure what the chairman had said. Was it "Can a Barbarian mingle with Greeks?" or, later, "May a German stand by a Roman citizen?" Was it the brave Norman oath, "May I be a Saxon if this be in my day!" or was a Spaniard glowering at a "dog of a Jew" (for, strange omen! a Jew sat here before me among this group of trustees)—was it any or all of these, or was it simply the familiar negro problem dressed anew—Can negroes be admitted to the use of public libraries in the South? And the answer seemed to me so distressingly obvious that I said simply, "I will express no opinion on that point."….The president of the Trustee Board then arose, gray-haired and courteous. He congratulated the last speaker and expressed pleasure at our call. He then gave us to understand…[that] Negroes would not be permitted to use the Carnegie Library in Atlanta.

388 "Anti-Jewish Legislation in Prewar Germany," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, April 2010, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/article.php?ModuleId=10005681.

389 Oscar Pappenheimer, "A Practical Suggestion," letter to the editor, *AC*, 10 Oct. 1906, 8.

390 Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 225; Mark Bauerlein, *Negrophobia: A Race Riot in Atlanta, 1906* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2001), 171; Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978), 193.

391 Bruce S. Allardice, "'The Cause a Righteous One': Louisiana Jews and the Confederacy," in *Louisianians in the Civil War,* eds. Lawrence Lee Hewitt and Arthur W. Bergeron, Jr. (Columbia, MO: Univ. of Missouri Press, 2002), 73, 75.

392 Bertram Korn quoted in Evans, *The Provincials*, 236. Also Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 2:69-71.

393 Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1951; reprint, New York: Atheneum, 1970)*,* 47-50, also 29-30; Libo, "The Moseses of Montgomery," 20; Stanton, "At One with the Majority," 147-48; Abraham J. Karp, *Haven and Home: A History of the Jews in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1985), 80. Also spelled Guttheim. See also Harold D. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of

Black-Jewish Relations Through 1900, Part 1" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1977), 292-93.

394 Leo Shpall, "Rabbi James Koppel Guttheim," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 22 (Jan.–Oct. 1939): 169-70.

395 Eric J. Brock, *The Jewish Community of Shreveport* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2002), 49, 71.

396 Carleton Beals, *The Story of Huey P. Long* (Philadelphia, 1935), 360, 358-59.

397 See Stuart Rockoff, "Mississippi," ISJL; Wendy Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses: Memoir of a Southern Jewish Woman* (Jackson, MS: Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 2000), 6-7, 43-44; ISJL, "Natchez, Mississippi"; Jennifer Moses, "Lost Tribe of Natchez," *NYT*, 20 Sept. 1998, 12, 20.

398 Charles Wyszkowski, *A Community in Conflict: American Jewry During the Great European Immigration* (Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 1991), 221.

399 Isaac Hermann, *Memoirs of a Veteran* (Atlanta, 1911), 234.

400 W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (1935; reprint, New York: Simon & Schuster, Touchstone, 1995), 652; Vernon Lane Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (1947; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 245.

401 "MSJE Board Member Profiles," *Circa* 8, no. 1 (spring 1999): 12.

402 Fedora Small Frank, *Beginnings on Market Street: Nashville and Her Jewry, 1861-1901* (Nashville, 1976), 82.

403 Richard E. Welch, Jr., *The Presidencies of Grover Cleveland* (Lawrence, KS: Univ. Press of Kansas, 1988), 65-66; Frank, *Beginnings on Market Street,* 82.

404 Wendy Lowe Besmann, *A Separate Circle: Jewish Life in Knoxville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2001), 44.

405 Irving L. Goldberg, "The Changing Jewish Community of Dallas," *AJA* 11 (1959): 91. Goldberg was a member of the National Executive Board of the American Jewish Committee.

406 Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks: A Travel Guide and History*, vol. 2 (New York, 1979), 256-88.

407 Bryan Edward Stone, "West of Center: Jews on the Real and Imagined Frontiers of Texas" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Texas at Austin, 2003), 235.

408 Louis Ginsberg, *History of the Jews of Petersburg: 1789-1950* (Petersburg, Va., 1954), 4.

409 Louis Ginsberg, *Chapters on the Jews of Virginia, 1658-1900* (Petersburg, Va., 1969), 15.

410 Leon F. Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Knopf, 1998), 357-58. Similarly, when a Jew urged his Norfolk brethren "to intervene on behalf of the hapless blacks," he was told that Blacks were "nothing but animals." Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Stein, *Bittersweet Encounter: The Afro-American and the American Jew* (1970; reprint, New York: Schocken Books, 1972), 32.

Advice From Our Jewish Mayors

Jews in influential positions often came into contact with the Black citizens in their jurisdictions. Sherman, Texas, mayor William Levy was invited to speak at the cornerstone laying of the College of the Northwest Texas Colored Citizens in 1890. He offered his best advice to the Black community, beginning his lecture with religious mythology. "Look me right in the face," he commanded,

> and you behold in me a man whose ancestors were also slaves—whose forefathers were also held in the iron chains of bondage 400 long and bitter years—and they were longer in slavery and worked harder and suffered more under the rod of the overseer and the lash of the tyrant than you and your fathers and mothers.[411]

Levy admitted to running a segregated school system but promised to "watch over the colored schools with the same interest as the whites, and you may safely trust us." He admonished the "colored" parents: "And you must treat [the teachers] with politeness that their influence over your children may be secured and never disturbed." He added condescendingly: "I am happy to state that a great many of our colored citizens behave so that they deserve our praise and conduct themselves so that they are respected."

The Jewish mayor then chastised his Black Texas audience, asserting that they were "hunters of enjoyments" and "slaves to gaudy shows and flashy displays" and that they held "entirely too many festivals and celebrations." They wasted "time and

costly money" and "spoil and ruin" their children by "teach[ing] them to become pleasure-hunters, idlers and spendthrifts."

Mayor Levy ended his speech warning Blacks away from the American dream, whilst adopting the political mission of the Ku Klux Klan:

> I would advise all our colored friends that the farther they keep away from politics and politicians…the more blessing they will deserve.[412]

Dr. Bryan Edward Stone wrote quite accurately that Levy's speech "was a thinly veiled attempt to keep his audience in line and to delay their advancement as long as possible."[413]

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411 William Levy, "A Jew Views Black Education: Texas—1890," *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (July 1976): 351-53. There is no historical or archaeological or genealogical evidence that the Caucasian Jews of Eastern Europe—from whom Levy is descended—were in any way connected to the Jews described in the Holy Bible. See Shlomo Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People* (London: Verso, 2010); Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and Its Heritage* (New York: Random House, 1976).

412 Levy, "A Jew Views Black Education," 354, 356, 358, 359.

413 Stone, "West of Center," 113-14. Similarly, Pittsburgh newspaper editor and rabbi Samuel Greenfield decried the Florida law separating the races in public schools, but blamed Blacks for such racism as he simultaneously invoked a Talmudic dictum: "By [education] alone will he be able in course of time to overcome the prejudice *which he inspires* either through his own actions or through his own ignorance. It must therefore be the work of an enemy of the race or of its progress which would hinder the advancement and education of that mass of uneducated and unprincipled children of Ham." (Emphasis ours.) *Jewish Criterion*, 18 Oct. 1895.

Jewish Politicians and the Formation of Jim Crow Law

Since emancipation, Jews in Dixie had helped to readjust state and local laws and customs to keep blacks substantially less equal in their freedom.

—

Harold Hyman, *Oleander Odyssey*

Early on, prominent Jews fought to establish, maintain, and strengthen the slave codes and the Jim Crow laws. In 1847, Maryland had a law on its books which established that Black testimony against white Christians was invalid. Dr. Joshua I. Cohen pushed for a law that explicitly added white Jews. Section one of Cohen's bill provides a potent example of how legal jargon is crafted for the elimination of Black citizenship rights. The purpose of the bill was to benefit the Jews, yet the bill is worded such that Jews are not even mentioned:

> Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland, That the distinction made… between persons professing the Christian religion, and those not professing the same, be hereby removed, and that no

> negro or mulatto slave, or free Indian, native of this or the neighbouring States, be admitted and received as good and valid evidence, in law, in any matter or thing whatsoever, that may hereafter be depending before any court of record, or before any magistrate within this State, wherein any white person is concerned.

As a practical matter, this made it impossible for Blacks with justifiable complaints against merchants, employers, or slaveholders to achieve any redress in any Maryland court of law. The object of the law, wrote Cohen, "is to remove all discrimination between different religious sects, as regards the application of the Law of Evidence." Once the bill was enacted, he boasted:

> [O]ur statute book is purged of an odious and offensive distinction, and now truly leaves, in the spirit of the constitution, and of the present age, every man the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience.

THE KEYNOTE OF THE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN

ISIDOR RAYNER AND DR. HERING IN SOUTHERN MARYLAND.

THE QUESTIONS TO BE DETERMINED ON THE SEVENTH OF NOVEMBER CLEARLY STATED

CONDITIONS IN CHARLES AND ST. MARY'S COUNTIES—STATEMENTS OF MESSRS. J. P. HAMILTON, WALTER J. MITCHELL AND DR. L. C. CARRICO, OF CHARLES COUNTY, IN REGARD TO

NEGRO DOMINATION.

AS PUBLISHED IN THE SUN OF OCTOBER 19.

THESE ARE THE REAL ISSUES. THE DEMOCRATS ARE WAGING A CONTEST AGAINST A NEW LICENSE FOR CRIME IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE DEAREST JEWELS AND HOLIEST TREASURES OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

LOWNDES AND HIS PARTY MUST BE DEFEATED TO SECURE HONEST GOVERNMENT IN THE COUNTIES OF THE STATE AND TO PROTECT THE PROPERTY OF THE MEN AND GIVE SECURITY TO THE WOMEN

Isador Rayner, Jewish senator from Maryland, addresses "Negro Domination" meeting. Baltimore Sun, Oct. 24, 1899.

Rabbi Isaac Leeser's *Occident*, the most widely read Jewish newspaper of the time, took up Cohen's "civil rights" fight, demonstrating that Cohen acted with the full support of the Jewish community. It treated the issue as though this exemption from Black testimony was one of those benefits of American citizenship Jews should naturally expect to enjoy.[414]

The law was passed in the state of Maryland but was part of a repugnant historical trend, another example of which is found in colonial New York. A law stripping Blacks of legal rights and establishing their legal status as slaves began with this phrase: "Since slaves are the property of Christians…" The Jews of New York, offended by this "discrimination," successfully petitioned for inclusion. Subsequent anti-Black laws made it clear that slaves were the property of "Christians *and Jews*." Aside from legally establishing Jews as white people, the law further defined the term *slaves* as synonymous with having black skin. As the Jewish scholar Dr. Salo Wittmayer Baron admitted, "Jews gained only at the expense of the Negroes."[415]

When North Carolina joined the rebellion against the United States, the state made just two changes to its Constitution: (1) it added a tax on African slaves, which further secured Blacks as property, and (2) it eliminated a long-ignored law[416] that disqualified Jews from holding office—further securing Jews as whites and full citizens.

Possibly the best documented case of Jewish involvement in creating Jim Crow law also occurred in Maryland. Just after the turn of the century the Democrats of that state proclaimed themselves to be "steadfast in [their] determination to eliminate the illiterate negro voter." In the years 1903–1909, Black disfranchisement became the dominant

political issue, as it had been all around the South since the end of the Civil War. The two "most vocal champions of the disenfranchisement were also the leaders of Baltimore's Jewish community," according to Jewish historian Philip S. Foner. Isador Rayner and Isaac Lobe Strauss, both Democrats, gave a series of speeches in which they stressed that white society must be protected from "depraved negroes." And to accomplish this, they said, Blacks had to be barred from voting. "The race issue is… one of self-preservation," said Rayner.

> The white race must prevail over barbarism, and this can best be achieved by reducing the Negro vote to the utmost minimum in Maryland.[417]

As the state's attorney general Strauss used all of his legal prowess to supervise the drafting of the anti-Black legislation.[418] He was so involved in its shaping that it became known as the Strauss Amendment. It effectively excluded Black voters without specifically using racial terminology. Historian Margaret Law Callcott described Strauss's creation as "surely the most lengthy and complex disfranchising plan ever seriously considered in the United States." Her analysis is instructive, as it exposes the diabolical craftiness used in "legalizing" discrimination:

> [The Strauss Amendment] designated six classes of persons who might vote in future elections in Maryland. The first four classes, which were conferred immediate voting rights, were designed to enfranchise all white males: (1) any person entitled to vote in or prior to January, 1869; (2) any male descendant

> of such person; (3) any foreign-born citizen naturalized between January 1, 1869, and the date of the amendment's adoption; and (4) any male descendant of such person. A person who qualified under any of these four categories and fulfilled residence and age requirements merely had to make a sworn personal affidavit to this effect, which registrars had to accept as *prima facie* evidence of qualification.

The last two classes created by the amendment were designed to obstruct Blacks from voting. According to Strauss's amendment, voting rights also would be extended to:

> (5) a person who, in the presence of the officers of registration, shall in his own handwriting, with pen and ink, without any aid, suggestion or memorandum whatsoever and without any question or direction addressed to him by any of the officers of registration, make application to register correctly, stating in such application his name, age, date and place of birth, residence and occupation, at the time and for the two years next preceding, the name or names of his employer or employers, and whether he has previously voted, and if so, the State, county or city and district or precinct in which he voted last, and also the name in full of the President of the United States, of one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, of the Governor of Maryland, of one of the Judges of the Court of Appeals of

> Maryland and of the Mayor of Baltimore City, if the applicant resides in Baltimore City, or of one of the County Commissioners of the county in which the applicant resides; or (6) a person, or the husband of a person, who owned and was assessed on the tax books for $500.00 of real or personal property, and had owned, paid taxes on, and had tax receipts for this property for the preceding two years.[419]

These are the very same kinds of laws put in place throughout the South that the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement fought to uproot a half century later.[420] The Baltimore *Afro-American Ledger* was outraged:

> Messrs Isaac Lobe Strauss and Isador Rayner scarcely ever speak at a meeting that they do not have a word to say against the despised Negro. They out Herod Herod in stirring up race prejudice against the Negro.

The paper called Strauss "The Prosecuting Attorney of the Colored Race in Maryland," and marveled at the racism displayed by the Baltimore Jews and Irish.[421] A Black journalist commented that Rayner "invoked upon his colored neighbors the terrors of [a pogrom]," and the *Springfield (Mass.) Republican* warned Jews that their response to this conflict would shape the future of Black–Jewish relations.[422]

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414 "News Items," *Occident,* April 1847, Jewish-American History Documentation Foundation, 2005, http://www.jewish-history.com/Occident/volume5/apr1847/news.html#Maryland. The web master of jewishhistory.com, which hosts the online site for this web page

reference, was moved to write the following:

> We don't normally include commentary on the primary documents included on this site, but the preceding article simply shocked us. To object to a minor discrimination in a law which is in and of itself totally discriminatory, boggles the mind, that someone could understand the injustice of religious discrimination, and yet totally fail to recognize the monstrous injustice of racism.

415 *The Colonial Laws of New York from the Year 1664 to the Revolution*, vol. 1 (Albany, 1894), 519-20 and 762; Thomas Joseph Davis, "Slavery in Colonial New York City" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia Univ., 1974), 78. Chapter 560 of the *Colonial Laws* is the first of this series of laws to add Jews to the provision. Ibid., 2:681. See Carl Nordstrom, "The New York Slave Code," *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History* 4, no. 1 (Jan. 1980): 24n; *The Colonial Laws of New York*, 2:683; Salo Wittmayer Baron, *Steeled By Adversity: Essays and Addresses on American Jewish Life,* ed. Jeannette Meisel Baron (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), 314.

416 Karin Zipf, "The Whites Shall Rule the Land or Die: Gender, Race, and Class in North Carolina Reconstruction Politics," *JSoHis* 65, no. 3 (Aug. 1999): 506 n. 13.

417 See Margaret Law Callcott, *The Negro in Maryland Politics, 1870-1912* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 126-29; Philip S. Foner, "Black-Jewish Relations in the Opening Years of the Twentieth Century," *Phylon* 36, no. 4 (winter 1975): 364-65. Also spelled Isidor Rayner.

418 Rayner had actually voted against an earlier bill because it had the unintended effect of disfranchising some white voters. This stance caused one prominent Jewish journal to publish erroneously the claim that "One of the most valuable services of his career was his successful fight against the move in Maryland to disfranchise the Negro." See Joshua Bloch, "Isador Rayner (1850-1912)," *PAJHS* 40, no. 3 (March 1951): 291.

419 Callcott, *The Negro in Maryland Politics*, 126-27.

420 Even Dr. King was aware of Jewish sentiments: "I think we all have to admit that there are Jews in the South who have not been anything like our allies in the civil rights struggle and have gone out of the way to consort with the perpetrators of the status quo." Quoted in Clive Webb, "A Tangled Web: Black-Jewish Relations in the Twentieth-Century South," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 192, 195.

421 Foner, "Black-Jewish Relations," 365; Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 233. Maryland's Jewish senator, Isador Rayner, was a bona fide white supremacist, yet several Jewish publications, including *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 40 (1950): 288, *EJ* (1972), 13:1590, and *The Concise Dictionary of American Jewish Biography,* ed. Jacob Rader Marcus (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1994), 2:510, all say Rayner was an opponent of Jim Crow and Black disfranchisement. See Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City,* 200; "Would Disfranchise Blacks: Isidor Rayner, Candidate for Senator from Maryland, So Declares," *NYT*, 28 Oct. 1903, 1. Rayner's own

words are memorialized in “Rayner on the Stump,” *Baltimore Sun*, 19 Oct. 1889, 4; “The Keynote of the Democratic Campaign,” *Baltimore Sun*, 24 Oct. 1899, 1; “For Reform: Democratic Nominees Take a Decided Conservative Position,” *Baltimore Sun*, 20 Sept. 1899, 10. For a northern example of Jewish participation in the undermining of Black civil rights, see Martha Biondi, “Robert Moses, Race, and the Limits of an Activist State,” in *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York,* eds. Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 116-19. Robert Moses, a Jewish city planner who held many official posts in New York, specifically manipulated the state’s laws to void Black civil rights.

422 Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 233. Jews voiced fear of being put on the level of “the negro.” Jeffrey Gurock, “The 1913 New York State Civil Rights Act,” *AJS Review* 1 (1976): 98; Yvonne DeCarlo Newsome, “A House Divided: Conflict and Cooperation in African American–Jewish Relations” (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern Univ., 1991), 78.

The "Great Betrayal of the Negro": Jews & the Compromise of 1877

The old black-Jewish coalition did much good. Among other things, it helped deck Jim Crow.

—

Richard Cohen, *Washington Post*

One of the most extraordinary events in the political history of Blacks and Jews in America occurred early in the year 1877. It was the year that Jewish millionaire banker Joseph Seligman was denied entry to his vacation resort in upstate New York, causing a major "anti-Semitism" scandal. In fact, the so-called Compromise of 1877 could easily be listed among the most significant events in Black American history. It was the backroom political deal, involving presidential rivals Rutherford B. Hayes (representing the Northern banking interests) and Samuel J. Tilden (representing the South's cotton interests), in which white Americans—North and South—agreed that after twelve years of "emancipation" Blacks would be returned to virtual slavery, denied civil rights, and assigned to permanent political, social, and economic inferiority.

In November of 1876 America was grappling with the fiercely contested presidential election.

The candidates appeared to be tied and votes were being challenged amid entirely valid charges of fraud and voter intimidation. The Congress was thrown into disruption as threats of secession and sectional vitriol filled the chambers.

At the root of the conflict was, once again, the fate of the Black man. Since the end of the Civil War, a bitter vanquished plantation elite and their loyal minions seethed over the Black man's emergence from abject slavery. This advancement was accomplished under a rigid and humiliating intervention by federal "Yankee" troops stationed throughout the South protecting the rights of Blacks against the resentful ex-Confederates and their Ku Klux Klan.

Southern legislators began a filibuster and threatened national disorder and even civil war if their man Tilden were not awarded the presidency, and the Hayes camp was just as adamant. After many days of political chaos, a group of politicians from both parties secretly convened at the Wormley Hotel in Washington to attempt to resolve the conflict and save the union from political disaster. On February 26th, 1877, a deal was struck that would profoundly affect the course of history for Black people in America. No other event—not the Civil War, and not the Emancipation Proclamation—so specifically and directly affected the future status of Blacks as a whole.

The agreement stated that if Hayes were awarded the presidency, he would remove the federal troops in the South, and the former Southern slaveholding class would be free to return to power and establish new forms of slavery free from federal oversight or control.[423] Jim Crow took immediate and wide-ranging effect. Lynchings, mass murders, racial pogroms, and general terror

escalated. Black property was stolen, Black schools were targeted, Black voting rights were abolished; and whites moved Blacks out of employment in the trades and industry, effectively locking them into plantation labor and domestic service. Jewish scholar Morris U. Schappes called the Compromise of 1877 the "Great Betrayal of democracy and the Negro people"—political treachery that reduced Blacks "to a state of economic poverty and political rightlessness."[424]

Further, the Wormley Hotel agreement permanently established the very principles by which American society, North and South, would institutionalize racial oppression. All future American domestic policies would be formed to reflect the unifying white racial ethos exemplified not in the United States Constitution, but in the Compromise of 1877. In fact, the Compromise of 1877 would in essence nullify, by agreement, the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments passed after the war ostensibly to secure Black citizenship.[425]

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423 February 26, 1877, is the actual birth date of Master Fard Muhammad, founder of the Nation of Islam.

424 William Hamilton Harris, *The Harder We Run* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982), 15-16; Morris U. Schappes, *The Jews in the United States: A Pictorial History, 1654 to the Present* (New York: Citadel Press, 1958), 101. In 1877, the U.S. government seized the Black Hills of Dakota from the Sioux Indians once gold was found there.

425 For a review of some of the specific programs and policies by which racism was institutionalized to benefit whites only, see *The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide*, by Meizhu Lui et al. (New York: New Press, 2006).

The Speech That Ended Black Rights in America

The role played by a Jewish Louisiana congressman, William M. Levy (1827–1882),[426] in this momentous event was monumental indeed. Once the Wormley Hotel deal was secured, the negotiators still had to return to Congress and persuade the combatants of both parties to buy into it. It was Levy who was entrusted to sell the deal to Congress and to assure his fellow Southerners that their interests had been protected.[427] His entire speech to Congress is preserved in the *Congressional Record* (March 1, 1877)[428] and is considered the most significant of all the speeches in the lengthy debate. *That a Jew was chosen to advocate in Congress for the permanent inferiority of the Black man and woman in America makes this event extremely significant in the history of the Black–Jewish relationship.*

In his speech, Levy represented the deal as "salvation" and "redemption" for the whites of Louisiana, who had been "crushed," "humiliated," and "impoverished" by "arbitrary and merciless rulers." To Levy, Black political rights meant the "usurpation and oppression" of white freedom and Reconstruction brought only "suffering and affliction" to the white South.

He said that Black emancipation caused "despair and danger" and further claimed that Louisiana's "innocent maidens" and "helpless infants" were in imminent peril. "I hold it my sacred duty," he said, to save Louisiana's whites "from the ruin and degradation which threaten them" and to "reliev[e] my beloved State from the bondage which oppresses and enslaves her."

The Jewish congressman simply dismissed the mass murders and lynchings of Blacks in his state[429]

as “slander” and claimed that “the white people of Louisiana have been most cruelly and grossly misrepresented.” The lies poured forth:

> I know…that the white people of Louisiana…will…extend equal and impartial justice to all classes of citizens…repress violence and lawlessness no matter where it originates, or by whom committed, and thus insure that harmony and good feeling which go hand in hand with the progress of the State [o]n the road of happiness and prosperity.

Levy’s passion won congressional support for the Compromise of 1877, and from that moment on the prospects for Black freedom in America were drastically altered. Shortly after his triumphant oration, William M. Levy became a member of the very same Louisiana State Constitutional Convention that in 1879 enshrined Jim Crow discrimination as the law of the land.[430]

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426 A former Confederate army major and a leader of the Louisiana Jewish community, Levy also served on the state supreme court until his death. See Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 2000), 104-6, 359; *UJE* (1942), 7:18.

427 Keith Ian Polakoff, *The Politics of Inertia: The Election of 1876 and the End of Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1973), 310-13; Ari Hoogenboom, *The Presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes* (Lawrence, KS: Univ. Press of Kansas, 1988), 49; Harry Barnard, *Rutherford B. Hayes and His America* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1954), 393-94. See also Ella Lonn, “Restoration of White Rule,” chap. 21 in *Reconstruction in Louisiana after 1868* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1918), esp. 512, 514.

428 House, Representative William M. Levy of Louisiana, 44th Cong., 2d sess., *Congressional Record,* 1 March 1877, 2046-47. Also, see “The Policy in the South,” *NYT*, 9 July 1877, 5.

429 See “Louisiana: Speech of Senator Morton in Indianapolis,” *NYT,* 23 Sept. 1874, 2; Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 437; Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877* (Baton

Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1974), 268-70; *NYT,* 18 April 1873, 1; 19 April 1873, 3; 4 Sept. 1874, 1; 5 Sept. 1874, 1; 10 Aug. 1877, 1. Also, John A. Carpenter, "Atrocities in the Reconstruction Period," *JNH* 47, no. 4 (Oct. 1962): 234-47.

430 See Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed,* 98 and passim; Lonn, "Restoration of White Rule," 495-525; Bertram W. Doyle, "The Etiquette of Race Relations—Past, Present, and Future," *Journal of Negro Education* 5 (April 1936): 203.

Bigoted Alliances: Southern Jews & Dixie Whites

In the post–Civil War South, right up until the Civil Rights Era, many prominent Jews formed close alliances with and tendered political and financial support to some of the most notorious race-haters in American history. According to Jewish writer Harry Golden, there was a disconcertingly long list of outspoken racists who "often spoke of their 'Jewish friends.'" In a 1955 article in the American Jewish Committee's *Commentary* magazine,[431] he named them:

- **Coleman L. Blease**: Governor of South Carolina, Ku Klux Klansman, and United States Senator between 1915 and 1924. An open and public supporter of the lynching of Blacks, he believed that "lynching is a protection to our civilization."[432]
- **"Cotton Ed" Smith**: Ellison D. Smith represented South Carolina in the United States Senate from 1909 until 1944. He walked out of the 1936 Democratic National Convention because a Black minister offered a prayer. According to *Time* magazine, Smith "never tried to overcome his horror at the thought of a Negro voting. He had two ideas: 1) keep Negroes down, 2) the price of cotton up."[433]
- **"Bob" Reynolds**: Served as senator from North Carolina from 1933 to 1945. He led a Senate attack against an antilynching bill, calling it a "legislative monstrosity." Since

there had been *only* 4,673 such murders since 1882, he reasoned, the bill made a "legislative mountain out of a molehill."[434]

- **Eugene Talmadge**: Governor of Georgia (1933–37, 1941–43). He dismissed several educators in the state university system who had advocated racial equality. In a campaign speech in 1946, he warned that "wise Negroes will stay away from the white man's ballot boxes."[435] "I like the nigger," he explained, "but I like him in his place, and his place is at the back door with his hat in his hand."[436]

- **Herman Talmadge**: Eugene's son, and Georgia governor in 1948 and 1950. He was a staunch opponent of civil rights and echoed his father's racist rhetoric. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1956 and was reelected three times.

Theodore Bilbo: Senator from Mississippi from 1935 to 1947, he was dubbed the Prophet of Racism. He advocated the deportation of Blacks to Africa and called his enemies "nigger lovers." He believed that "one drop of Negro blood placed in the veins of the purest Caucasian destroys the inventive genius of his mind and strikes palsied his creative faculty."[437] Despite his stated opinion that "The nigger is only 150 years from the jungles of Africa," where he cut up "some fried nigger steak for breakfast," Bilbo had a Jewish campaign manager in 1940.[438]

Harry Golden claims that these legendary

American bigots all had Jewish friends, and, further, "For Reynolds and the two Talmadges at least, their friendships with Jews involved both political support and substantial campaign contributions."[439] Another notable, Mississippi governor Paul Johnson—who as lieutenant governor physically denied James Meredith entry into the state university in 1962—had a Jewish law partner named Herbert Ginsberg, who was active in Hattiesburg's Jewish community.[440] Johnson's stump speech included the line "You know what the N.A.A.C.P. stands for: Niggers, alligators, apes, coons and possums."[441]

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431 Harry L. Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South: Segregation at Sundown," *Commentary,* Nov. 1955.

432 Blease's letter to the editor of *Jeffersonian* (Thomson, Ga.), 23 Jan. 1913, 12: "I care nothing for the criticisms of Cubans, mixed-breeds, negroes or negro lovers." Bryant Simon, "The Appeal of Cole Blease of South Carolina: Race, Class, and Sex in the New South," *JSoHis* 62, no. 1 (Feb. 1996): 57-86; "Blease Says 'To Hell With Constitution,'" *NYT*, 6 Dec. 1912, 1.

433 "Curtains for Cotton Ed," *Time,* 7 Aug. 1944.

434 Julian M. Pleasants, *Buncombe Bob: The Life and Times of Robert Rice Reynolds* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2000): 114-15.

435 Steven F. Lawson, *Black Ballots: Voting Rights in the South, 1944-1969* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1976), 103.

436 Saul Jacob Rubin, *Third to None: The Saga of Savannah Jewry, 1733-1983* (Savannah, 1983), 308.

437 Jean Lau Chin, *The Psychology of Prejudice and Discrimination: Racism in America* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 88 n. 1.

438 A. Wigfall Green, *The Man Bilbo* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1963), 104; Stephen J. Whitfield, "The Braided Identity of Southern Jewry," *AJH* 77 (1988): 374.

439 Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South," 408. Also, Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010), 4.

440 ISJL, "Hattiesburg, Mississippi."

441 "If You Try & Don't Succeed…" *Time*, 16 Aug. 1963.

Of Racists and Philo-Semites

Many of these notorious racists were also great admirers of the Jewish people—some could even be called Judeophiles or philo-Semites. They were active promoters of Jewish culture and zealous protectors of their Jewish citizens. Here are profiles of a few of those notable Southern Gentiles who openly expressed vile, even murderous, hatred for all Blacks, while articulating a deep love and respect for the Jewish people:

Zebulon Vance (1830–1894)

As a Confederate officer, governor, and U.S. senator from North Carolina, Zebulon Vance endures as a trusty rampart of American white supremacy. He dedicated his life to ensuring that Blacks would never rise in any capacity above servant and menial laborer.[442] He is also fondly remembered in Jewish lore as one of the most beloved American philo-Semites.

Zebulon Vance was no less than Confederate royalty to many of the white faithful. He traveled the country for nearly twenty years lecturing on what he called "The Scattered Nation," presenting the Jews as the world's saviors:

> The Jew is beyond doubt the most remarkable man of this world—past or present….There is no man who approaches him in the extent and character of the influence which he has exercised over the human family….From him have we derived the form and pattern of all that is excellent on earth or in heaven.[443]

Vance hated Blacks as much as he loved Jews, and contrasted their supposed achievements and failures in his public diatribes.[444] "The African Negro, the descendants of barbarian tribes, for 4,000 years have contributed nothing to… civilization," he railed. In the United States, "laws and partisan courts alike have been used to force him into an equality with those he could not equal."[445] Vance was generally believed to be the Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan.[446] His 1876 election to the governorship crushed all hopes of Black progress in North Carolina and initiated a Black exodus from the state.[447]

Nonetheless, Jews across America deified Vance, giving him gifts and erecting statues in his honor. He and Jewish cotton merchant Sam Wittkowsky co-founded the local Masonic Lodge, which had several Jewish members. Wittkowsky fondly remembered that "No Israelite in North Carolina ever voted against Zebulon B. Vance." On one occasion in Chapel Hill a number of Jews presented their trusted Klansman with a walking cane with a genuine gold head.[448]

For decades after Vance's death the Jewish head of New York's Macy's department store, Nathan Straus, funded a yearly wreath-laying ceremony at the base of the Vance Monument. Another annual event was conducted by the Jewish organization B'nai B'rith. The Jewish people honored Vance because, they believed, he had "challenged the bigotry inherent in his own society." In 1928, one of the Jewish founders of the NAACP, Rabbi Stephen Wise, delivered a "ringing address" on the virtues of the man who had dedicated his life to returning Blacks to slavery, even comparing him to Alexander the Great, the King of Persia, and President Woodrow Wilson.[449]

Josephus Daniels (1862–1948)

North Carolina newspaperman and politician Josephus Daniels was one of the most effective and unapologetic proponents of white supremacy in American history. Daniels loved Jews and befriended them—and they him, to the point where he was described as "probably the premier Christian Zionist on the American scene." Daniels delivered lectures in the pulpits of synagogues before admiring Jews, *yarmulke* on his head, trumpeting both Zionism *and* racism. Despite his leadership in the "white supremacy" movement in his state, Daniels was awarded a golden certificate for his donations to the Jewish National Fund. It was one of many honors he received for his service as one of the nation's most dedicated philo-Semites.[450]

His public role in the oppression of the African is truly impressive. When he purchased the *Raleigh News and Observer* in 1894, he turned the paper into an organ for the Democratic Party, which at that time was uncompromisingly in favor of re-enslaving the Black population. The leading Black politician in the state called Daniels' newspaper a "malicious and vindictive negro-baiting organ."[451] Daniels' biographer even called him the "spokesman" for North Carolina's "white supremacy" campaign. Through his paper he fought tirelessly against Black voting rights and "stirred up the race issue to fever pitch," writing of "perspiring Negroes" and their "rank odors" and promoting the canard that the Black man was an inherent threat to white women.[452]

He decried what he called "Negro rule" and painted all Black attempts at political power as sinister. Daniels applauded and encouraged those whites who violently intimidated Black voters, and approved of the tactics of terror. He even went to

the polls himself to challenge Black voters.[453]

The deadly Wilmington massacre of 1898—an American pogrom in which at least 14 and possibly as many as hundreds of Blacks were murdered in cold blood—was the result of Daniels' instigation.[454]

Wilmington mayor Sol Fishblate was a member of the local synagogue and an ardent Democrat involved in the local effort of the Democratic Party to maintain white supremacy. Blacks had formed an alliance with the Populists and the Republicans to try to overturn Democratic rule. Democrats countered, resorting to race baiting, fraud, and violence to defeat the challengers, the so-called Fusionists. According to the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life (ISJL), "Most Wilmington Jews were Democrats who supported these attacks…[and] [s]everal local Jews signed a petition" calling for the removal of pro-Black office holders in Wilmington in 1898.

> [Merchant-banker] Nathaniel Jacobi was a leader of this effort, which organized business owners to threaten to fire their black employees if the Fusion ticket won. As a local Democratic party leader, Fishblate was also involved in this effort to reclaim power.

At a public meeting, both Jews spoke up in support of a "White Declaration of Independence" to free whites from "Negro Domination." Fishblate declared:

> The choice in this election is between white rule and Negro rule. And I am with the white man, every time!

According to the ISJL, “This meeting later resulted in the violent Wilmington Race Riot of 1898, in which white mobs terrorized the city’s black population and forcibly installed Democratic Party rule.” Jewish Mayor Solomon Fishblate joined the mob of 600 whites that massacred possibly hundreds of Blacks and forced many more to flee their homes.[455]

Twenty years later, and seeing no irony or contradiction, Josephus Daniels stood before a meeting of Jews at Carnegie Hall to protest the pogroms against Jews in the Ukraine. He vowed to the Jews that “the day would never come when America would fail to stand against injustice and oppression in any part of the world.”[456]

In 1912, Daniels served as Woodrow Wilson’s presidential campaign manager. His statement of national policy toward Black American citizens set the tone for the Wilson administration:

> [T]he subjection of the negro, politically, and the separation of the negro, socially, are paramount to all other considerations…And we shall recognize no emancipation…

Wilson began the wholesale firing of Blacks from government positions, and established segregation for those who remained, continuing the employment of Blacks only where whites did not find them “objectionable.”[457]

Daniels’ appointment to Wilson’s cabinet as Secretary of the Navy in 1913 was cause for rejoicing among the Jews. Daniels became “that Cabinet member to whom the Jews always turned,” making lifelong friends with the most prominent of the tribe. His very first speech was given to a

Washington banquet of the Jewish organization B'nai B'rith.[458]

Among Daniels' close friends and supporters were several Jews most histories claim were friends of the Black man and woman, including Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, Sears magnate Julius Rosenwald, writer Harry Golden, and NAACP pioneer Rabbi Stephen Wise, who, amazingly, called Daniels "a never failing friend of the oppressed."[459] Rosenwald, a financier of hundreds of segregated "negro schools,"[460] became personally attached to Daniels. Other Jews, like Klan sympathizer Bernard M. Baruch, befriended Daniels in a personal way, loaning him $25,000 in 1932 to keep his newspaper afloat.[461]

In the end Josephus Daniels' service to the Jews, within the context of the Black–Jewish relationship, represents the radically divergent interests of Blacks and Jews. To the Black man, Daniels represents the very essence of American race hate; to the Jew, the very same man is remembered "as resembling those 'beautiful' old men who are the cherished elders of Israel."[462]

Thomas E. Watson (1856–1922)

Georgian Populist leader Tom Watson supported Black voting rights when he thought he would benefit, but quickly turned against Blacks when he saw that white power gave him more advantages. He proposed that Blacks be eliminated from Georgia politics altogether by "a change in our Constitution which will perpetuate white supremacy in Georgia."[463] At the same time, Watson explicitly praised the Jews.[464]

Watson, a lawyer, infuriated Jews in 1913 first by refusing to act as counsel for Leo Frank, a

prominent Atlanta Jew who was convicted of the murder of a 13-year-old white girl, and then by stridently supporting Frank's guilty verdict and death penalty.[465] After the episode, which ended in Frank's lynching, an apparently forgiving Jewish community actually participated in the Watson-led anti-Black conservative faction that swept the next state elections.[466] Watson forcefully defended Jews and proclaimed his personal respect for Judaism in 1921 when industrialist and accused anti-Semite Henry Ford ran for Senate:

> Henry Ford is editing a paper devoted to war upon the Jewish race…the race that produced Moses, Solomon, David...and Jesus Christ. All Christendom rests upon a Book, and that Book is the Book holding the creed of a Jew. Nevertheless, Henry Ford condemns the whole race, forgetting that in all our wars the Jew has fought side by side with the Gentile, forgetting that the soundest principles of democracy and good government and catholic humanity are to be found in the sacred parchments of the Jews....[467]

This view contrasts sharply with Watson's stance on the Black man: "The negro is naturally lustful and will take a female, even a beast, if it costs his life…" In 1921, Watson appeared at a congressional inquiry looking into Klan-related violence. He positioned himself next to the hearing's main witness, Imperial Wizard William J. Simmons, and vowed to protect him from "any attacks from anybody." When asked if he himself was a member of the Invisible Empire, Watson proudly asserted that in Georgia he was regarded as "the King of the Ku Klux." At his funeral was an

eight-foot-high cross of red roses sent by the Klan.[468]

James K. Vardaman (1861–1930)

Mississippi governor James K. Vardaman's malevolence toward the African doubtless inspired, aided, and comforted countless Mississippi lynch mobs.[469] The "negro," Vardaman said, was a curse to the country and had cost it more than "all the wars it has waged, added to the ruin wrought by flood and fire." He was "a lazy, lying, lustful animal which no conceivable amount of training can transform into a tolerable citizen." His nature, said the governor, was unlike the white man's but "resembles the hog's." Vardaman counseled the lynching of Blacks, saying, "We would be justified in slaughtering every Ethiop on the earth to preserve unsullied the honor of one Caucasian home." After all, he continued, "We do not stop when we see a wolf to find if it will kill sheep before disposing of it, but assume that it will." He thought that money spent for Black education was "a positive unkindness" to the Black man, rendering him "unfit for the work which the white man has prescribed, and which he will be forced to perform." "Why squander money on his education," he asked, "when the only effect is to spoil a good field hand and make an insolent cook?"[470]

In contrast Vardaman saw the Jewish race as a model of civic responsibility. According to scholar Albert D. Kirwan, "Vardaman's racial prejudice did not extend to Jews." He decried the persecution of Jews in Europe, and said that as a race, "there is no class of citizens that are more public spirited and deserving of the good opinion of mankind." It was Vardaman who, as governor, signed the official charter of incorporation for the Jewish synagogue

in Vicksburg.[471] He petitioned the governor of Georgia in 1915, urging him to commute the death sentence of a Jewish man who had been convicted of murdering a young Gentile girl.[472] When Louis D. Brandeis was nominated in 1916 to become the first Jewish Supreme Court justice, Vardaman became one of his most ardent supporters.[473] Of Blacks, however, he said: "the good are few, the bad are many, and it is impossible to tell what ones are… dangerous to the honor of the dominant race until the damage is done."[474]

Hoke Smith (1855–1931)

Jewish historian Leonard Dinnerstein described Georgia senator Hoke Smith as "maybe the most bare toothed, fire breathing racist." As a newspaper owner, governor, and a United States senator, Smith worked to disfranchise and otherwise oppress Blacks throughout the South. He ran for office on the fear-mongering platform of "black terror ruining the white south" and warned that it was "folly for us to neglect any means within our reach to remove the present danger of Negro domination." As Georgia's governor, Smith instigated the deadly Atlanta race riot of 1906, when whites massacred Blacks without any cause. In the very next year, Atlanta's Beth Israel held a dedication for its new synagogue—with Smith as its honored guest.[475] He established literacy tests and property requirements for voting—barriers that kept Blacks in political subjection for generations.[476] Nevertheless, when the infamous Leo Frank murder case commenced in 1913, Frank's Jewish counsel asked Smith to defend the B'nai B'rith leader in court.[477]

As a senator, Hoke Smith's view of the Jewish character was a positive one. He voted in 1916 to make Louis D. Brandeis the first Jewish person to

serve on the United States Supreme Court, a lifelong, irrevocable appointment establishing Brandeis as one of the nine final arbiters of all United States law.[478]

"Pitchfork" Benjamin R. Tillman (1847–1918)

South Carolina senator "Pitchfork Ben" Tillman was the political face of American lynching, and for many years he dictated the political affairs of the state. He defiantly promoted the public torture and murder of Blacks as though it were a Biblical commandment.

> I have three daughters…but, so help me God, I had rather find either one of them killed by a tiger or a bear and gather up her bones and bury them, conscious that she had died in the purity of her maidenhood, than to have her crawl to me and tell me the horrid story that she had been robbed of the jewel of her womanhood by a black fiend.[479]

Tillman considered Blacks ignorant, debased, and debauched, referred to them as wild beasts, scoundrels, rapists, barbarians, savages, and cannibals, and felt that their emancipation was a national tragedy. A "little smattering of education," he thought, was "destructive of the original virtues of the negro race."[480] Of the appointment of Blacks to political office, he said on the Senate floor in 1918:

> You can keep up that kind of thing until you compel the people of the South to use shotguns and kill every man you

> appoint….We do not intend to submit to negro domination and all the Yankees from Cape Cod to hell can't make us submit to it.[481]

Although Tillman admitted that Blacks were men and not monkeys, he qualified this statement by saying that "it took something else besides having the shape of a man to make a man" and that some Blacks were "so near akin to the monkey that scientists are yet looking for the missing link."[482] It seems impossible that Jews would view Senator Tillman as a friend, yet the *New York Times*—a Jewish-owned and -operated newspaper—referred to him as "tolerant" and further reported that "among his supporters were men of the Jewish and Catholic religions."[483]

Senator Tillman also stood up for Jewish womanhood. When a Black woman, Mrs. Minnie M. Cox, was appointed in Indianola, Mississippi, in 1903 to serve as postmaster in Cohen's (or Cohn's) Brooklyn Bridge Store, Tillman strongly objected. He told the senate that the Black woman encouraged an unacceptable boldness among Black customers and that violent riots nearly occurred when a rumor spread that a Black man "proposition[ed]…a poor Jewess who was clerking in the same store."[484]

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442 Vance's mother once sold the Africans she enslaved to pay off her debts. Her creditors allowed her to "buy back Mammy Venus for a dollar." See Gordon B. McKinney, *Zeb Vance: North Carolina's Civil War Governor and Gilded Age Political Leader* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2004), 13.

443 Selig Adler, "Zebulon B. Vance and the 'Scattered Nation,'" *JSoHis* 7, no. 3 (Aug. 1941): 357-77; Harry L. Golden, *Jewish Roots in the Carolinas: A Pattern of American Philo-Semitism* (Greensboro, NC: Deal Printing, 1955), 42.

444 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 133-34; Adler, "Zebulon B. Vance," 357-77. Vance's hatred of Blacks is recounted in McKinney, *Zeb Vance*, 237-38, 244-45, 274-82, 299, 308, 313-15,

318, 319, 321, 353.

445 McKinney, *Zeb Vance,* 299. The African origin of civilization has been conclusively dealt with by many sources, including the following list of scholarly works. Cheikh Anta Diop, *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality?* ed. and trans. Mercer Cook (Brooklyn, NY: Lawrence Hill, 1974); Cheikh Anta Diop, *Civilization or Barbarism: An Authentic Anthropology* (New York: Lawrence Hill, 1991); Yosef A.A. ben-Jochannan, *Black Man of the Nile and His Family* (1972; reprint, Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1989); Martin Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, vol. 2, *The Archaeological and Documentary Evidence* (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1993); Jacob H. Carruthers, *Essays in Ancient Egyptian Studies* (Los Angeles: Univ. of Sankore Press, 1984); Martin R. Delany, *Principles of Ethnology* (1879; reprint, Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1991); Charles S. Finch, III, *The Star of Deep Beginnings: The Genesis of African Science and Technology* (Decatur, GA: Khenti, 1998); William Leo Hansberry, *Africa and Africans as Seen by Classical Writers*, ed. Joseph E. Harris, vol. 2 of *The William Leo Hansberry African History Notebook* (Washington, DC: Howard Univ. Press, 1981); George G.M. James, *Stolen Legacy* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954); Ridgely A. Mu'min Muhammad, *I Will Not Apologize: The Resurrection of the Master Architect* (Bronwood, GA: K.R.I.S.T., 2003); Theophile Obenga, *Ancient Egypt and Black Africa*, ed. Amon Saba Saakana (London: Karnak House, 1992); Theophile Obenga, *A Lost Tradition: African Philosophy in World History* (Philadelphia: Source Editions, 1995); Runoko Rashidi, *Introduction to the Study of African Classical Civilizations* (London: Karnak House, 1993); Ivan Van Sertima, ed., *Blacks in Science: Ancient and Modern* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983); Ivan Van Sertima, ed., *Egypt, Child of Africa* (New Brunswick: Transaction Press, 1994); Ivan Van Sertima, ed., *Egypt Revisited* (New Brunswick: Transaction Press, 1989); Chancellor Williams, *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Issues of a Race from 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1976).

446 Stanley F. Horn, *Invisible Empire: The Story of the Ku Klux Klan, 1866-1871* (New York: Haskell House, 1973), 194.

447 Frenise A. Logan, *The Negro in North Carolina, 1876-1894* (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1964), 10, 118-19; Glenn Tucker, *Zeb Vance: Champion of Personal Freedom* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966), 461-62; John G. Van Deusen, "The Exodus of 1879," *JNH* 21, no. 2 (April 1936): 111-29.

448 Golden, *Jewish Roots in the Carolinas*, 43; ISJL, "Charlotte, North Carolina"; Adler, "Zebulon B. Vance," 374; Tucker, *Zeb Vance,* 412-14, 454.

449 McKinney, *Zeb Vance*, 410, 411; Morris Speizman, *The Jews of Charlotte, North Carolina: A Chronicle with Commentary and Conjectures* (Charlotte: McNally & Loftin, 1978), 4-5; Steve Rasmussen, "Asheville's Monument to Tolerance: Confederates, Jews Join Hands on Vance's Birthday," *Mountain Xpress* (Asheville, N.C.), May 7, 2003, http://www.mountainx.com/news/2003/0507vance.php.

450 Joseph L. Morrison, "A Southern Philo-Semite: Josephus Daniels of North Carolina," *Judaism* 12, no. 1 (winter 1963): 78, 83,

85; Joseph L. Morrison, *Josephus Daniels: The Small-d Democrat* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1966), 69, 108, 272-73.

451 Morrison, *Josephus Daniels,* 28. For examples, see Josephus Daniels, *Editor in Politics* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1941), 253-54, 285.

452 Morrison, *Josephus Daniels*, 32, 33; Daniels, *Editor in Politics,* 253-54, 286-315; Josephus Daniels, *Tar Heel Editor* (1939; reprint, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press 1974), 176.

453 Morrison, *Josephus Daniels*, 34; Daniels, *Editor in Politics*, 295, 422-23.

454 Morrison, *Josephus Daniels*, 33-34. The wide discrepancy in casualty numbers is a result of a number of factors: whites trying to downplay the numbers to stave off federal intervention and labor problems, wildly inaccurate census numbers for Blacks, Blacks removing bodies to keep them from being further desecrated, and the common policy among Northern newspapers (which mirrored the judicial system) to accept testimony from only white sources.

455 ISJL, "Wilmington, North Carolina"; Rogoff, *Down Home*, 82-83, 162-69.

456 Morrison, *Josephus Daniels*, 108.

457 Nathaniel Weyl and William Marina, *American Statesmen on Slavery and the Negro* (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1971), 325-37.

458 Morrison, "A Southern Philo-Semite," 82, 89-90. Daniels also addressed the annual convention of the North Carolina B'nai B'rith in 1941.

459 Ibid., 83, 90. Golden's book *Jewish Roots in the Carolinas* is subtitled "A Pattern of American Philo-Semitism," and he dedicates it "to the memory of Josephus Daniels" and three others.

460 Julius Rosenwald helped finance hundreds of "industrial" schools in the South as part of a larger effort of American industry to keep Black labor in the region and in "negro jobs." See James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860–1935* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1988), 205-8. Desperate conditions were driving Blacks to the North, so American industrialists believed that some improvements were needed to stem the outflow. On the subject of Rosenwald's racism, see Harold D. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of Black–Jewish Relations Through 1900, Pt. 2" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1977), 466.

461 Morrison, "A Southern Philo-Semite," 84-85. See also the biographical sketch by staff at the North Carolina Collection, "The North Carolina Election of 1898—Josephus Daniels (1862-1948)," North Carolina Collection, Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries, http://www.lib.unc.edu/ncc/1898/bios/daniels.html; and Stephen J. Whitfield, "The Braided Identity of Southern Jewry," *AJH* 77 (1988): 372.

462 Morrison, "A Southern Philo-Semite," 91.

463 Charlton Moseley, "Latent Klanism in Georgia, 1890-1915," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (fall 1972): 369-71, 383 n. 30. The effort was effective. By 1910 the population of whites and Blacks in Georgia was roughly the same, but the number of registered Black

voters was 11,285 compared with 261,145 registered whites. Watson's "inclusive" platform is outlined in "Watson Limbers Up," *AC,* 6 June 1894, 3. For examples of Watson's racism, see "Canada and the 'Color Line'," *Jeffersonian*, 6 April 1911, 1: "Without the aid of the whites, negroes of Africa will never be other than savages….The white nations should adopt a settled policy on this grave question, and should adhere to it rigidly. In all affairs of government, THE WHITES, EXCLUSIVELY, SHOULD CONTROL [emphasis his]." Watson advocated for "mob law" and the lynching of Blacks: 2 Jan. 1913, 4; 15 May 1913, 4-5; 12 Feb. 1914, 1, 8. He advocated slavery: 16 Jan. 1913, 13. Other racist articles dated 5 March 1914, 7; 14 March 1914, 7-8; 16 April 1914, 1; 30 April 1914, 6, 9; 7 May 1914, 4, 8.

464 Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 233; Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 162.

465 The Jews asked Watson to defend Frank even though they, like all Georgians, were well aware of his anti-Black views and his Klan sympathies. See Lindemann, *The Jew Accused,* 260-62.

466 Harry Simonhoff, "Leo M. Frank," in *Saga of American Jewry, 1865-1914* (New York: Arco, 1959), 372; Mark K. Bauman, "Factionalism and Ethnic Politics in Atlanta: German Jews from the Civil War through the Progressive Era," in *Politics and Religion in the White South*, ed. Glenn Feldman (Lexington, KY: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2005), 37.

467 Steve Oney, *And the Dead Shall Rise: The Murder of Mary Phagan and the Lynching of Leo Frank* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003), 615. See also Louis E. Schmier, "'No Jew Can Murder': Memories of Tom Watson and the Lichtenstein Murder Case of 1901," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (fall 1986): 453.

468 Oney, *And the Dead Shall Rise,* 399, 615; C. Vann Woodward, *Tom Watson: Agrarian Rebel* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963), 446, 449-50.

469 Stewart Emory Tolnay and E. M. Beck, *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1995), 25.

470 Albert D. Kirwan, *Revolt of the Rednecks: Mississippi Politics, 1876-1925* (Gloucester, MA: P. Smith, 1951), 146-47; Lawson, *Black Ballots*, 98. See also Neil R. McMillen, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1990), 72ff.

471 Kirwan, *Revolt of the Rednecks*, 224n; Iuliu Herscovici, *The Jews of Vicksburg, Mississippi* (Xlibris, 2007), 152.

472 Stephen A. Brown, "When Middle-Class Ambition Met Southern Honor: A Cultural History of the Leo Frank Case" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Illinois, 1999), 55.

473 Robert A. Garber, ed., *Jews on Trial* (Jersey City, NJ: KTAV, 2005), 151-52. Though Brandeis was the first nominated, sixty-three years earlier President Millard Fillmore offered a Supreme Court seat to another Jew—slave-owner, Ku Klux Klan financier, and Confederate Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin, who declined the offer. See Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates*, 62.

474 Garber, *Jews on Trial*, 147.

475 ISJL, "Atlanta, Georgia."

476 David Harmon, *Beneath the Image of the Civil Rights Movement and Race Relations: Atlanta, Georgia, 1946-1981* (New York: Garland, 1996), 10; "Atlanta Views on Riots," *NYT*, 24 Sept. 1906, 2; Joel Williamson, *A Rage for Order: Black–White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), 143-44.

477 *AC*, 25 June 1913, 1.

478 Leonard Dinnerstein, *The Leo Frank Case* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1968), 157; Melvin I. Urofsky, "Attorney for the People: The 'Outrageous' Brandeis Nomination," *Supreme Court Historical Society 1979 Yearbook*, Supreme Court Historical Society, http://www.supremecourthistory.org/04_library/subs_volumes/04_c15_d.html.

479 Francis Butler Simkins, *Pitchfork Ben Tillman: South Carolinian* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1964), 397.

480 Ibid., 399.

481 Ibid., 5, and 74-75, 289-90, 396; Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009), 166, 200.

482 Simkins, *Pitchfork Ben Tillman*, 394-95.

483 "Klan Has Hard Time In South Carolina," *NYT*, 19 Nov. 1923, 17.

484 Eric L. Goldstein, "'Now Is the Time to Show Your True Colors': Southern Jews, Whiteness, and the Rise of Jim Crow," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History,* eds. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 141; Willard B. Gatewood, "Theodore Roosevelt and the Indianola Affair," *JNH* 53, no. 1 (Jan. 1968): 55-56, and passim.

Jewish Politicians in the Jim Crow South

Jews were not limited simply to befriending and supporting the Gentile racists in the political sphere. They too aspired to Jim Crow leadership and they encountered no resistance in this pursuit.

Charles Jacobson

Even though Charles Jacobson (1874–1957) was a "devoutly religious" Jew and a B'nai B'rith president, he was a "trusted lieutenant" of the racist three-term Arkansas governor Jeff Davis (1862–1913). For more than a decade Jacobson played a leading role in Davis's regime of self-described "rednecks." Davis publicly defended lynching while sharing a stage with Pres. Theodore Roosevelt. He supported the Arkansas Streetcar Segregation Act of 1903, which established the same discrimination Rosa Parks would fight in Alabama more than a half century later. He once pardoned a white mob leader named "Krickenberg" who had been charged with the attempted lynching of a Black man.[485] The governor revealed his thoughts on American jurisprudence:

> In our country when we have no doubt about a Negro's guilt we do not give him a trial; we mob him and that ends it… [T]he mere fact that this negro got a trial is evidence that there was some doubt of his guilt.[486]

Particularly devious were Davis's aggressive tactics in subduing the Black vote—Black voter turnout in certain times and places exceeded 90 percent.[487] As Davis's "chief assistant," Charles Jacobson managed the "wholesale fraud and

intimidation" of Blacks, which kept the Democratic Party in power. The B'nai B'rith president himself explained simply, "Votes were needed." Ballot-box stuffing, Black disfranchisement, physical violence and intimidation—even murder—were all, to Jacobson, "part of the game."[488] His record notwithstanding, Jacobson, by his own account, never once faced a single instance of anti-Semitism, becoming state senator in 1911.[489]

Franklin J. Moses

In 1868, Franklin Israel Moses became the chief justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court—the first Jew to serve in that role in any American state. His son, Franklin J. Moses, believed deeply in the Southern racial order, and his name became legendary for his service to white supremacy.

Early in his career, the younger Moses held "an intense hostility to any material changes in the South's racial order." He colorfully described the Freedmen's Bureau, that agency ostensibly designed to aid the ex-slave into citizenship, as a "hideous abortion."[490] As the president of the South Carolina state senate, he also oversaw passage of the infamous Black Code, which was designed to force Blacks back into virtual slavery. Moses achieved power—by his own admission—by deceiving the Black citizens of South Carolina into believing he was their friend:

> I used to buy niggers for $2 to do anything I wanted done when I was Speaker of the Assembly….I wanted to be Governor. It was a pride—a personal and family pride. I saw there was but one way—make myself popular with the niggers. I did it. I flattered some, associated with others, but bought a

great many more….[491]

Ernest B. Kruttschnitt

When the state of Louisiana held a constitutional convention in New Orleans in 1898, its purpose was simple: to ensure that Blacks never wield any power over white people, ever. All of the top white supremacists in the state gathered for the affair and they unanimously chose a Jew to preside over the proceedings. Ernest B. Kruttschnitt—a nephew of the former United States senator, Confederate cabinet official, and Ku Klux Klan financier Judah P. Benjamin—also served as chairman of Louisiana's Democratic Party.

In his acceptance speech, Kruttschnitt called the convention "little more than a family meeting of the Democratic party of Louisiana." He was proud that in the very hall "where, thirty-two years ago, the negro first entered upon the unequal contest for supremacy," they would now reestablish "the relations between the races upon an everlasting foundation of right and justice." According to Jewish historian Bobbie Malone:

> In other words, blacks would be stripped of the ballot, and many impoverished small farmers…would be discouraged from voting.

Further, New Orleans rabbi Max Heller "open[ed] the proceedings with prayer." The next several generations saw a complete elimination of Black political rights in Louisiana and throughout the South.[492]

Edwin Moïse

Edwin Moïse (pronounced mo-eéz) was a devout

Charleston Jew whose father was a leader in the Jewish reformmovement led by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise.[493] His people found no inconsistency in his actions when young Edwin expressed his willingness to die to help keep the African enslaved on Southern plantations. He invested his entire fortune of $10,000 in organizing a company of 120 cavalrymen, known as the "Moïse Rangers," to commit their lives to that great cause. According to Dr. Clive Webb, "His reputation as a champion of white supremacy, however, was earned through his involvement with the Red Shirts," heavily armed and violent white terrorists specifically tasked to elect Ex-Confederate Major General Wade Hampton to the South Carolina governorship in 1876.[494] Their stated campaign strategy required that each Red Shirt

> must feel honor-bound to control the vote of one Negro by intimidation or purchase…[and] never to threaten a man that deserves to be threatened. The necessities of the time require that he should die.[495]

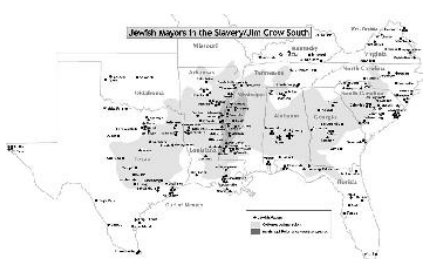
Moïse's valor and commitment to the cause earned him a position as Hampton's chief military officer (adjutant general).[496] Jews were "strong supporters" of the Red Shirt movement, and former Jewish slave trader H.H. De Leon of Charleston was counted among Hampton's forces. Ultimately, Moïse served as the speaker of the Louisiana state legislature, doing his part to reinforce Jim Crow.[497]

Moïse publicly railed against Northern control of the rebel South. "Typical" Moïse rhetoric included the imagery of a white Northern politician comfortable and safe in Hell, "holding a squad of Negroes between himself and the flames."[498] Upon

his death in 1903, a South Carolina newspaper eulogized Moïse in effusive appreciation: "[H]is eloquence, his zeal, and courage inspired [his troops] to stand steadfast for white supremacy..."[499]

While Jews often claim to have suffered political oppression in Europe, some among them were found aggressively attempting to destroy Black political rights in America. In 1907 an embarrassed American Jewish Committee president, Louis Marshall, wrote:

> It seems incredible to me that a body of Jews who have just emerged from virtual slavery, and who are seeking in this country the privilege of voting, which was withheld from them in the land in which their ancestors have lived, should for a moment consider the propriety of arguing in favor of the disfranchisement of any citizen of this country.[500]



485 Robert W. Meriwether, "The Faulkner County Lynching (1905)," Faulkner County Historical Society, http://www.faulknerhistory.com/articles/lynching.htm; "Editor Whips Gov. Davis' Man Friday," *Times Record (Fort Smith, Ark.),* Dec. 1, 2003, http://swtimes.com. The *Times Record* reports that the managing editor of the *Fort Smith News Record* had physically "chastised" (assaulted and battered) Charles Jacobson, private secretary to Governor Davis. This report originally appeared in the *Fort Smith News Record* on Sept. 27, 1903. Also, Arsenault, "Charles Jacobson of Arkansas," 71, 72, 74.

486 Rupert B. Vance, "A Karl Marx for Hill Billies: Portrait of a

Southern Leader," *Social Forces* 9 (1930): 186.

487 Eric Foner, "Rights and the Constitution in Black Life During the Civil War and Reconstruction," *JAH* 74, no. 3 (Dec. 1987): 878.

488 Arsenault, "Charles Jacobson of Arkansas," 60, 181 n. 31. See for example Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 118-19, 139-44.

489 Arsenault, "Charles Jacobson of Arkansas," 70-71.

490 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 87 n. 39.

491 R. H. Woody, "Franklin J. Moses, Jr., Scalawag Governor of South Carolina, 1872–74," *North Carolina Historical Review* 10, no. 2 (April 1933): 131.

492 Bobbie Malone, *Max Heller: Reformer, Zionist, Southerner, 1860-1929* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1997), 93.

493 For Wise's bigotry, see section titled "The Racial Wisdom of Rabbi Wise," this volume. Also see *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* 1:307-9.

494 The Red Shirts were one of hundreds of white supremacist organizations using racist violence to intimidate Black voters. They were distinguished only by their specific strategic objective in South Carolina. Their handiwork was reported in "Massacre of Negroes Resumed," *NYT*, 11 Dec. 1876, 1, and in "The Hamburg (S.C.) Butchers," *NYT*, 3 Aug. 1877, 5. For Jewish participation, see Charles W. Joyner, *Shared Traditions: Southern History and Folk Culture* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1999), 184.

495 Lenora E. Berson, *The Negroes and the Jews* (New York: Random House, 1971), 25.

496 "A Short History of Camden's Early Jews," *Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 8, no. 2 (summer 2003): 5. An online Jewish exhibition refers to Moïse as a "Redeemer" who "epitomizes the fierce allegiance Jewish South Carolinians felt for the Confederacy…" and as "a commander of the Red Shirts—an armed militia opposed to Republican Reconstruction…" See "Edwin Warren Moïse (1832–1903)," A Portion of the People: This Happy Land, June 21, 2006, University Library of the Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, http://www.lib.unc.edu/apop/thishappyland.html. See also Murray Friedman, *What Went Wrong? The Creation and Collapse of the Black-Jewish Alliance* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 37, wherein the author, without referencing his claim, says that Moïse "opposed the violent methods of the Ku Klux Klan…but he maintained a discreet silence out of a combination of opportunism and fear."

497 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 95-96. ISJL, "Charleston, South Carolina": "Charleston's native-born Jews reacted to the racial politics of Reconstruction in a manner that was little different from other whites in the city." See also ISJL, "Sumter, South Carolina."

498 See Alfred B. Williams, *Hampton and His Red Shirts: South Carolina's Deliverance in 1876* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1935): 213, 228-29; Harold Moise, *The Moise Family of South Carolina* (Columbia, SC: R.L. Bryan, 1961), 122.

499 Elzas, *The Jews of South Carolina*, 248-51.

500 Newsome, "A House Divided," 78-79. See also Foner, "Black-Jewish Relations," 364-65.

Mayors & More: Jewish Public Officials & Their Service in Dixie

Below is a state-by-state *partial list* of the highlights of Jewish political service to the South (along with the approximate dates Jewish public officials held office) during slavery, Jim Crow, and beyond. As public servants they were entrusted by their white Gentile friends and neighbors to fortify and extend the infrastructure of anti-Black oppression. They decided on such mundane civic issues as road building, school policies, labor relations, water and sewer installation and maintenance, zoning and regulation of parks and public areas, policing and court policies—always with careful attention to maintaining white supremacy in every sphere of political activity. We can also safely assume that the list of *appointed* Jewish officials serving as police chiefs, judges, prosecutors, and in any number of other public offices is many times longer.

> [This list is based on information from many sources, including *The American Jewish Year Book*, vols. 1-42; Eli N. Evans, *The Provincials* (New York, 1973); Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks*, vol. 2 (New York, 1979); Isaac Markens, *The Hebrews in America* (1888; reprint, New York, 1975); Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s–1990s* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994); Selma S. Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt: The Jewish Community of Memphis, Tennessee, 1840s-1960s* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1998); ISJL; *EJ*; *JEncy*; and *UJE*.]

Alabama Mayors

Demopolis: Morris Ely (elected in 1905); Isidore Bley (1910); Bony Fields (1949-52)

Madison: Ann van Leeuwen (1990-92)

Mobile: Israel I. Jones (d. 1877); Lazarus Schwarz (1911-15); Leon Schwarz (1926, 1932, 1933)

Montgomery: H. C. Moses (1870s); Henry Faber (1875);

Morris Moses (1884-88); Mordecai Moses (1875) 3 terms; Alfred Moses (1886)

Pollard: Nathan Strauss (late 19th century)

Selma: Simon Maas (1887-89); Marcus Meyer (1895-99); Louis Benish (1915-20)

Sheffield: Albert Moses (appointed town's first mayor after Sheffield was incorporated in 1885)

Alabama officials

Philip Stern: state solicitor of Alabama

Isidore Shapiro: state legislator from Birmingham

Philip Phillips: state legislator from Mobile (1854)

Solomon Jones: Mobile alderman

Israel Jones: Mobile city councilman (briefly was acting mayor of Mobile)

Isaac Krentzman: West Blocton city councilman (1880s)

I. R. Hochstadter: Birmingham alderman, and board of education (circa 1876)

William Leinkauf: Mobile school board (1878)

Samuel Ullman: Birmingham Board of Education (1884–1904)

Charles N. Feidelson: municipal judge in Birmingham

Louis Falk: Decatur city alderman, school board member (late 19th century)

Hugo Schloss: Eufala city council (late 1800s)

Simon Wampold: probate judge of Montgomery County

Harry Shiretzki: police chief of Anniston (killed in the line of duty in 1924)

Morris Coplan: Florence city council (1901)

Robert Herstein: Huntsville city treasurer (during Reconstruction Era)

Daniel Schiffman: Huntsville city councilman (1880s)

Ike May: Jasper Board of Education

Lee Heyman: Lanett city councilman (elected 1893)

Jacob Cohen: Mobile city marshal (1841, 1842)

Adolph Proskauer: served in the state legislature during Reconstruction

Marx Leva (from Selma): Assistant Secretary of Defense (1949-51)

Arizona officials

Solomonville: Isador Solomon (early 1880s, town's first postmaster)

Arkansas Mayors

Arkansas City: Abraham Dreidel elected several times, 1901-5, and 1910-11

Camden: Leo Berg (served for 6 years in the 1920s)

Conway: Alphonse Hamberg, Jr. (early 1940s)

Crawfordsville: Joe Warshaw (1925–50)

Dermott: Dave Kimpel (1890s, the town's second mayor)

Dumas: Gus Waterman (1904, the town's first mayor); Charles Dante (1920s)

El Dorado: I. L. Pesses (1967-75)

Eudora: Reynold H. Meyer; Harold Hart

Helena: Aaron Meyers (1878-80); Jacob Fink (1906)

Heber Springs: Mortimer Frauenthal (b. 1871-1936) served 2 terms

Little Rock: Jonas Levy (1860-64); Frederick Kramer (1873-75, 1881-87), also school board president

Pine Bluff: L.E. Goldsmith (1895); Simon Bloom (1913-19); Charles Weil (1840-1914) acting mayor

Arkansas officials

Samuel Abowitz: Arkansas City council and school board (early 1900s)

Abe Lazarus (1863-1930): Camden school board president

Joseph Levy (1839-1903): Camden city council

Jacob B. Friedheim (1848-99): Camden school board

Moses "Mose" Stern (1852-1925): Camden city council

Leonard M. Stern (1885-1951): Camden alderman, municipal judge (elected 1945)

Leo Hamberg (b. 1887): Conway alderman

Eli Dante: Dermott alderman

Lewis Friedman: appointed postmaster at Fort Smith (served 1933-44)

Jonas Levy: Little Rock city council (1857)

Phillip G. Back (b. 1902): Little Rock justice of the peace

Jacob Mitchell: Hot Springs justice of the peace (1840s)

Henry Kaufman (1870-1943): elected twice as state representative from Sebastian County, serving 1931-35

Jacob Baer: Sebastian County treasurer (1870s)

Mathias Abraham Cohn: state legislator from Augusta (1870s)

Aaron Meyers: Helena city marshal, tax collector, treasurer, school board member (1870s)

Julius Lesser: Marianna city treasurer, alderman (post-Civil War)

? Fisk: Helena alderman (1877)

Abraham Dreidel: state senator (1907)

Nathan Levi (1826-1907): elected Center Point town treasurer (1870), town marshal (1890)

Joseph “Jo” Frauenthal: Conway city councilman, pres. of school board, head of Chamber of Commerce

Reynold H. Meyer: mayor, postmaster, 30 years on the Eudora school board

Alvin Meyer, Sr. (1908-1988), son of R.H. Meyer, served as president of the Eudora school board.

Carroll Meyer (1897-1988): served on the Eudora city council for 18 years

Harold Hart: Eudora city council (10 years), president of the Chamber of Commerce

Ernestine Friedlander: Eudora postmaster (1890s)

Bernhard Baer: served several years as a Fort Smith alderman, beginning in 1873

Isaac Ehrman (1836-1917): Helena city alderman

Eli Newman: Helena city council

Sam Ciener: Helena school board (12 years)

David Solomon: Helena school board

David Solomon, Jr.: Helena school board

Leo Mundt and Ed Graumann, Jr., served as local judges in Helena.

Jacob Trieber (1853-1927): appointed as a federal judge in 1900; served as Helena city councilman, county treasurer, and U.S. district attorney

Henry Cohn (1844-1904): Hot Springs justice of the peace

J.C. Wolf: Hot Springs alderman

Bernard “Billy” Gross (1854-1919): Hot Springs city councilman

Nathan L. Schoenfeld: state representative from Garland County

Ernest F. Klein: Hot Springs school board

Three Hot Springs Jews have been elected president of the

local chamber of commerce.

Sam Epstein (1875-1944): Lake Village school board president

Morris Rosenzweig (1876-1950): Lake Village city council and school board

Maurice S. Rubenstein (1910-79): Lake City school board member

Abe Ottenheimer (1838-96): Little Rock alderman

Daniel Ottenheimer (1835-1916): Little Rock city councilman, school board member, alderman

Albert Cohen (1834-92): Little Rock alderman

Louis Cohen (1834-1924): member of the Little Rock school board (1893-1900)

Dan Daniels (1848-1931): Little Rock alderman (16 years), serving as acting mayor on occasion

Max Hilb (1828-81): Little Rock alderman (elected several times), served as acting mayor

Ben S. Thalheimer (1850-1914): Little Rock alderman

Sam Spitzberg: joined Little Rock Police Department in 1912 (served 10 years), justice of the peace (1920s and 1930s)

Louis Volmer (1840-1914): Little Rock alderman (18 years)

Lazar Hirsch: Newport city treasurer and deputy sheriff

David Goldberg (b. 1881): elected to the North Little Rock school board

Jacob Fink (1862-1923): Helena school board

Ike Miller: Osceola alderman (c. 1890s/early 1900s)

Charles Weil (1840-1914): elected to the Pine Bluff city council, serving for twenty years

Sam Hilzheim: state legislator from Pine Bluff (1890s)

Sam Levine: state legislator from Pine Bluff (1930s and 1950s)

William Block: Wynne justice of the peace, deputy county clerk, deputy collector of taxes

J.D. Block: elected state representative in 1886

Gus Waterman: served as postmaster from 1881 to 1887, Dumas

Haskell Wolff: spent three terms on the Dumas city council and served as president of the local chamber of commerce

Max Yoffe: Forrest City council (c. late 1800s)

Louis Tilles (1830-75): Fort Smith school board

Philip Pfeifer (1831-97): Little Rock school board member

Morris Levy (1852-1916): Argenta (North Little Rock) school board (served for many years, including a number of yrs. as

its president)

Jacob Menkus (1840-1908): Little Rock justice of the peace (12 years)

Morris Gershner (1873-1941): North Little Rock Police Department sergeant and detective (1927-41)

Leon Gershner (Morris's son): Arkansas State Police (25 years), retired as captain

Herman Kahn: Little Rock city council (8 years)

Max Dampf: Searcy County tax assessor (1878-80), clerk (1884-86)

Harry Hanf: Pine Bluff alderman (early 1900s)

Sol Miller: Pine Bluff alderman

Henry Nathan: Pine Bluff alderman

Nathan Cook: Pine Bluff city council (2 terms)

Gabriel Meyer (1834-1917): Pine Bluff city council and school board (25 years), justice of the peace (6 years)

Frank Silverman: Pine Bluff county and probate judge (1876), deputy sheriff, and sheriff

E. B. Bloom (1865-1938): Pine Bluff city clerk, city treasurer, county clerk

David Aschaffenberg: Pine Bluff justice of the peace, city councilman, city clerk and recorder (post-Civil War)

Nathan Arnof (1901-86): McCrory town councilman

Morris Wilenzick (b. 1862): Augusta school board and town council

Joe Warshaw (1891-1960): Crawfordsville alderman, school board member

Jack Stiel Dante (1900-1977): Dumas school board member (10 years)

Haskell Wolff (b. 1918): Dumas city council

Abraham Block: postmaster of Hempstead County (c. 1830)

David Block (Abraham's son): Hempstead County treasurer (1848-54), state representative (1856-57)

Charles Jacobson: state senator (1911-13)

Other Little Rock Jews who served in public offices included J.S. Wolf, J.J. Strauss, Joseph Meyer, James Pollock, H.D. McCowan, Solomon Landsberg, Simon Ellenbogen, Joe Loeb, Rabbi Louis Wolsey, and Sam Storthz.

Florida Mayors

The following cities elected Jewish mayors: Dade, DeLand,

Jacksonville, Marianna, Miami, Ocala, Tallahassee, and Tampa (Herman Glagowski)

Pensacola: Adolph Greenhut (1913-16); Max L. Baer (1937-39); B.I. Greenhut ([Adolph's son] 1965-67)

Florida officials

M. Henry Cohen: a municipal judge (elected) in Tampa

Harry Goldstein: state legislator from Fernandina

William Lehman: state representative (1973-93)

David Yulee: U.S. senator

Georgia Mayors

Albany: Samuel B. Brown (1901-2)

Alma: Nathan Cohen (elected 1960)

Athens: Heidi Davison (elected 2002, re-elected 2006)

Atlanta: Sam Massell, Jr. (1969-73)

Columbus: I.I. Moses; Jacob I. Moses (1844)

Dublin: Jefferson Davis Hermann (1909-10); Solomon Hermann (Jefferson's brother)

Eastman: Elias Hermann

Fitzgerald: Abe Kruger (mayor pro tem), c. 1950s

Sandersville: Louis Cohen (1870s-1880s)

Savannah: Herman Myers (1895, 1905) first Jewish mayor; Susan Weiner (1990s)

Georgia officials

David Emanuel: sworn in as 6th governor of Ga. in 1801

Mordecai Myers: Savannah city alderman (1818), legislator (seven terms between 1824 and 1837)

Mordecai Levi: Savannah alderman (1800s)

Moses Sheftall: Savannah alderman (1800s)

Mordecai Sheftall (1735-95/97): Savannah magistrate, warden, and state legislator

Mordecai Sheftall, Sr.: Savannah judge (1847-51)

Mordecai Sheftall, Jr.: Savannah police chief (1849-51)

Isaac Minis: Savannah alderman (1800s)

Abram Minis: Savannah alderman (1800s)

Levi S. D'Lyon: Savannah alderman (1800s); judge (1838-45, 1861-63)

Isaac D'Lyon: Savannah alderman (1800s)

Solomon Cohen: Savannah alderman (1800s), legislator (1842 and 1865)

Emanuel De la Motta: Savannah alderman (1800s)

Abraham A. Solomons: Savannah alderman (1800s)

Moses J. Solomons: Savannah alderman (1800s)

Joseph Lippman: Savannah city council (1870s)

Samuel H. Eckman: Savannah city council (late 1800s), Savannah alderman (1874-77)

Elias A. Weil: Savannah city council (late 1800s), Savannah alderman (1879-81)

Mathias H. Meyer: Savannah alderman (1870-77)

Herman Myers: Savannah alderman (1885)

D(an) Merz: West Point school board (1870s)

Lee Heyman: West Point city council (1893)

Samuel Weil: legislature (1870s)

Lewis Arnheim: legislature (1870s)

Adolph Brandt: legislature (1870s)

David Mayer: Atlanta school board (1870s)

Philip M. Russell: legislator (five times between 1865 and 1887)

Aaron Haas: Atlanta alderman (1873-75)

Raphael Moses: legislator (1877)

Samuel P. Hamilton: Savannah alderman (1877-79)

Charles Wessolowsky: Dougherty County alderman (1870), superior court clerk (1871-75), state representative (1875), state senator (1876)

Samuel B. Brown: Albany alderman (c. early 1900s, several terms)

Joseph Ehrlich: Albany alderman (1888), longtime member of board of education

E.H. Kalmon: Albany alderman

Morris Wessolowsky: Albany alderman

Edward Davis: Albany city commissioner

Joseph Rosenberg: president of the Albany Board of Education

Harry Goldstein: Albany city councilman (1970s and ‘80s)

Moses Michael: treasurer of the Athens Board of Education

Joseph Meyers: Augusta city council (post-Civil War)

Samuel Levy: Augusta city councilman, judge (late 1800s)

C. Henry Cohen: Augusta prosecutor (1877-1901)

Isaac Levy: Augusta sheriff “for many years” (prior to 1871)

Issac [sic] Isaiah Moses: Columbus school superintendent (1880s)

Maurice Rothschild: Columbus school board member (1949)

Raphael J. Moses: state legislator from Columbus (during Reconstruction)

Abe Kruger: Fitzgerald city councilman

Isaac May: Rome city council (1910s-1920s)

Max Meyerhardt: Rome school board (1880s-early 1900s), city judge (1879-91)

Kentucky Mayors

Ashland: David Aronberg (1951-55)

Central City: W.J. Hirschberg (1933-35)

Louisville: Jerry Abramson (1985-98; 2003-current)

Middlesboro: Isaac Ginsberg (1933-35)

Paducah: Meyer Weil (1871, 1877)

Somerset: Abraham Wolf (1921-23)

Louisiana Mayors

Alexandria: Edward Weil (1875-76)

Bellevue: Jacob Bodenheimer (1850s)

Donaldsonville: Solomon Weinschenck (1874); Meyer Lemann (1881); David Israel (1870s); Walter Lemann (1912)

Haughton: Henry Bodenheimer (1885-87, the town's first mayor)

Lake Charles: Adolph Meyer (1874-88)

Lake Providence: Eliaz Stockner

Monroe: Arnold Bernstein (1918-37)

Morgan City: Maurice E. Norman (elected 1922)

Napoleonville: Solomon Klotz (served multiple terms); Samuel Klotz (son, 1939-45)

New Orleans: Martin Behrman (1904-1920, 1925-26)

Shreveport: Samuel Levy (1873-76); Ben Holzman (1900-1902) was reportedly in audience when Lincoln was assassinated; Ernest Bernstein (1906-8)

South Highlands: E. M. Bodenheimer (1927)

South Highlands Village: Emmanuel Mahne Bodenheimer (1920s)

Vidalia: Lewis Arnheim (1869-71)

Louisiana officials

Judah P. Benjamin: U.S. senator, cabinet official in the Confederacy, slave owner

Edwin Moise: attorney general, speaker of state house

Julius Levin: Alexandria city councilman, president of the school board (1870s)

Benjamin Franklin Jonas: represented New Orleans in the state legislature (1865-68), governor (1879), La. state senator (1879-85)

Henry Hyams (owned 42 slaves): La. state senator (1855), lt. governor (1859)

William Winter: Shreveport city councilman (1890-92); state legislator (1904-8)

Simon Leopold: legislator from Phoenix

David B. Samuel: legislator from Shreveport

Bertrand Weil: state senator from Alexandria

Ernest Bernstein: Shreveport alderman

J. Isaac Friedman: legislator from Natchez

Jacques Lehmann: Morgan City councilman (late 1800s)

Sol Loeb: Morgan City council (c. 1920s)

Henry Loeb: Morgan City council (c. 1920s)

Alexander Phillips: served three terms as alderman in New Orleans (1826-28)

Max Dinkelspiel: state court of appeals (1919-24)

Emile Godchaux: served on court of appeals (1890s)

David Moore: Thibodeaux justice of the peace (1870s)

Mayer Cahn: Assumption Parish state senator (1878)

Jonas Rosenthal: Alexandria city councilman, postmaster of Alexandria (1870s), Rapides Parish school board member (1879-1904)

Moses Rosenthal: Alexandria city treasurer (1878)

Adolf Meyer: state legislator (1905)

Adolph Meyer: elected U.S. House of Representatives in 1890, served until his death in 1908

E. Salomon: legislator (1860)

Leon Kahn: Shreveport city council

August Leopold: town sheriff, Bastrop

J. Frankel: Crowley's first postmaster, member of the first city council

Solomon Klotz: Donaldsonville postmaster, mayor of Napoleonville, member of Assumption Parish police jury

David Israel: Donaldsonville alderman, postmaster, treasurer

J.E. Blum: Donaldsonville alderman

Jacob Kaliski: state legislator from Monroe

William M. Levy: served the Shreveport district in the U.S. House of Representatives (1875)

Shreveport has had a Jewish constable, 13 Jewish city councilmen serving a total of 24 terms, six Jewish members of the school board, four Jewish members of the police jury and two city surveyors that were Jews.

Maryland officials

Isidor Rayner: state legislator (1878); state senator (elected 1886); state atty. gen. (elected 1899)

Isaac L. Strauss: state atty. gen. (1907)

Mendes I. Cohen: mem. of Md. House of Delegates (1847-48)

Jacob M. Moses: state senator (1900-1904)

Martin Emerich: legislator (1879), county commissioner

Mississippi Mayors

At least 22 Jews were mayors in Mississippi.

Brookhaven: 3 Jews have served as mayor: Abraham Lewinthal (1889), Sam Abrams (1910), Harold Samuels (1970s and 1980s)

Glendora: Nutty Moyer; Harold Moyer

Greenville: Leopold Wilczinski (served as the first elected mayor of Greenville in 1875); Jacob Alexander (late 19th century)

Louise: Willie Sklar (mayor for 25 years)

Meridian: I.A. Rosenbaum (1970s and 1980s)

Natchez: Isaac Lowenberg (1882-86); Saul B. Laub (1929-36)

Port Gibson: Simon Unger (1891-98)

Rolling Fork: Sam Rosenthal (1924-69)

Rosedale: M.J. Dattel (1970s)

Shaw: Jacob Cohen (1892-97)

Summit: Solomon Hyman (town's first mayor)

Vicksburg: Lazarus Lindsey (circa 1861); Lawrence Leyens (2001-2009)

Waterproof Lake: A. G. Yamer (1870s)

Yazoo City: Harry Applebaum (1954-60)

Mississippi officials

Adolph Jacobs: Natchez alderman (1880s)

Israel Moses: legislator from Natchez

Alex Kuhn: Vicksburg alderman (1870)

Rabbi B. H. Gotthelf: Vicksburg school board member (1870s)

Theodore Pohl: Greenville treasurer, tax collector (1870s)

Nathan Goldstein: Greenville city council, board of supervisors (1870s)

E.S. Sellinger: asst. chief of police of Greenwood

Jerry Shemper: Hattiesburg city councilman

Kutcher Threefoot (changed orig. name from Dreyfus): served several terms as president of the Meridian school board (early 1900s)

Samuel Ullman: Natchez alderman (1877-79)

Cassius L. Tillman: Natchez sheriff, county treasurer (1880s)

Meyer Eiseman: Fayette board of supervisors president (1870)

Charles Blum: Nitta Yuma treasurer (1898)

M. A. Levy: Vicksburg selectman (1832-33)

Levi M. Lowenberg: Vicksburg justice of the peace (1863-1900)

Abe Kiersky: Vicksburg tax assessor (1889-1937)

Henry Haas: Vicksburg county tax assessor (1950s and 1960s)

Lee C. Schloss (1863-1933): Woodville city councilman, city treasurer, president of the Woodville school board

Leon Schwartz: Woodville city clerk, alderman (c. 1895)

North Carolina Mayors

Durham: Mutt Evans (1950-62)

Enfield: Simon Meyer (mayor pro tem), c. 1890s

Fayetteville: Monroe Evans (Mutt's brother, elected 1965)

Gastonia: Leon Schneider (elected 1955)

Greensboro: Ben Cone

Holly Ridge: Alfred Popkin

Lumberton: David Weinstein (1987-1991)

Tarboro: Henry Morris (1885)

Whiteville: Terry Mann (2009)

Wilmington: Solomon Fishblate (1878-82); brothers Bill Schwartz and B.D. Schwartz

North Carolina officials

Kope Elias: state senator (1887)

Samuel Wittkowsky: Charlotte alderman (1878)

Jay Hirshinger: Charlotte school board

Solomon Weil: Goldsboro alderman (1881)

Lionel Weil: Goldsboro alderman (1904-1922), school board member

Joseph Hahn: register of deeds (elected 1892) and sheriff (elected 1894), New Bern

Meyer Hahn: Craven County sheriff (elected 3 times, starting in 1880), New Bern

Joseph Stern: Scotland Neck town council (1896)

Sidney Stern: Scotland Neck treasurer

David Lichtenstein: Tarboro school board member, alderman

Jacob Feldenheimer: Tarboro commissioner (1870s)

William Cohen: Weldon alderman, treasurer (1902-1904)

Sol Lipinsky: Asheville city councilman

Emil Rosenthal: Wilson city council (1870)

Jacob Henry: state legislator, Beaufort (1808)

Solomon Bear: Wilmington alderman (1880s)

Solomon Fishblate: Wilmington alderman (1873)

Oklahoma Mayors

Cordell: J.J. Aberson (mayor three times)

Sayre: Leo Meyer (his was the only Jewish family in town at the time)

Seminole: Melvin Moran (elected 1975)

South Carolina Mayors

Barnwell: Herman Mazursky (1938-70)

Camden: Hayman Levy (1843-44)

Clover: Herbert Hirsch

Columbia: Mordecai De Leon (1833-36); Henry Lyons (1850-55); Abraham Alexander (1897-99); Oscar Alexander (1931-37)

Darlington: O.A. Alexander (served three terms each as city councilman and mayor)

Eutawville: Harry N. Marcus (late 1940s to the early 1970s)

Georgetown: five Jewish mayors in the 19th century, three during slavery (before 1818); L. S. Ehrich; Solomon Cohen (mayor, tax collector, postmaster [1789-1800]); Sol Emanuel (elected 1876, 1877); Harold Kaminski (1930-35); Sylvan

Rosen (1948-61)

Greenville: Max Heller (elected in 1971)

Lake City: Henry Nachman (early 20th century)

Manning: Julien Weinberg (served two terms on the city council and two terms as mayor)

Spartanburg: William Barnet III (2002-2010)

Sumter: Richard Moses (one term)

South Carolina officials

Alligator: Robert Kaplan

Brookhaven: Abraham Lewinthal (1889); Sam Abrams; Harold Samuels (1977-85)

Charleston: Lewis Gomez, jail turnkey (1802); Elisha Elizer, dep. sheriff (1802); Moses Solomon, constable (1802); Morris Goldsmith, dep. U.S. marshal (1815-1850); Nathan Hart, constable (1821), slave dealer (1827), slave owner (1830); Solomon Moses, constable (1822); Samuel Hyams, keeper of jail (1822); Mark Marks, dep. sheriff (1822); Solomon Moses, Jr., dep. sheriff (1822); Samuel Hart, commissioner of markets (1852-59), slave dealer (1830s)

Georgetown: Abraham Cohen (c. 1739-1800), postmaster general, slave owner and dealer

Greenville: Jacob Alexander; Leopold Wilcinski

Habsburg: Henry Solomon, alderman (1860)

Hazlehurst: Paul Kemp

Jonestown: Sam Friedman (1940s-1950s)

Louise: William Sklar (25 years; retired in 1970s)

Marlborough District: Joshua David, Jr., sheriff (1821)

Joseph Fromberg: state legislator, Charleston

Solomon Cohen: state legislator, Charleston (1830s)

Abraham Mendes Seixas (1751-1799): Charleston city magistrate (c. late 1700s)

Philip Phillips served in the S. Carolina and Alabama legislatures, and the U.S. Congress.

Abraham Cohen: served as deputy postmaster (1789-1800)

Dr. Levi Myers: legislator in 1796 and served as the state's apothecary general until 1822

Mordecai Myers: Savannah city alderman (1818), Savannah city council clerk (1819)

Mordecai Levy: state legislator, Kershaw County (1834-38)

Chapman Levy (owned 31 slaves in 1820): legislator,

Columbia (1829-33; 1836-38)

Judah Barrett: Columbia city councilman (two terms)

Mordecai David: Columbia city councilman (early 1900s)

Hyman Rubin: Columbia city council (1952-66), state senate (1967-84)

Morris Fass: Dillon alderman (early 1900s)

Theodore Kohn: Orangeburg alderman (late 1800s)

Morris Mazursky: Sumter city council (7 terms)

H. Cronheim: Marion, S.C., official (1870s)

Raphael J. Moses, Jr.: S.C. legislator (1878)

Franklin J. Moses: legislator (mid-1800s)

Myer Moses (1779-1833): state legislator, commissioner of schools, slave dealer

M.C. Mordecai: Charlestonian elected to house S.C. legislature in 1859

Tennessee Mayors

Chattanooga: George Washington Ochs (1893-97); Joseph Wasserman (1900)

Memphis: Henry Loeb (1960s)

Moscow: Phil Bacharach (1920s-1930s)

North Knoxville: L.A. Gratz (1870s); Louis Gratz elected mayor 4 times starting in the 1890s

Tennessee officials

Abe Cohn: legislator

David Friedman: Chattanooga alderman (1870s)

Gustavus Schiff: Nashville Board of Education (1875-77)

Rabbi Jacob J. Peres: pres. of Memphis school board (1866)

? Schwartz: police chief of Chattanooga

Jacob Felsenthal: Jackson alderman, school board member

Frank Winick: justice of the peace

Charles Siegal: Knoxville city councilman, vice-mayor

Max Wolf: Knoxville county commissioner

Max Friedman: Knoxville city council

David Blumberg: Knoxville city council

Joseph Andrews: Memphis alderman (1847-48)

David Gensburger: Memphis alderman (1870s)

Will Gerber: Memphis city attorney (1935-42), atty. general of Shelby County

William Rosenfeld: state legislator from Memphis

Joseph Hanover: state legislator from Memphis

Emanuel Rosenfeld: Murfreesboro city council

Benjamin Herman: Nashville school board (two terms)

Benjamin Lindauer: Nashville city councilman, council president (1899)

Jacob Levine: magistrate of the Nashville county court for several decades until his death in 1934

William Goodman: Memphis alderman (1845-46)

Paul Schuster: Memphis alderman (1863)

Henry Marks: appointed to police force in 1862

Texas Mayors

Alto: Fred Florence (1919)

Austin: Jeffrey Friedman (elected 1975)

Brownsville: Benjamin Kowalski (elected 1910); Ruben Edelstein (1975-79)

Corpus Christi: A. A. Lichtenstein (1953-54)

Corsicana: Gus Gappelberg (1991-93)

Dallas: Adlene Harrison (1976); Annette Strauss (1987-91); Laura Miller (2002)

Dickinson: Veta Winick (1990s)

Dublin: Morris Hoffman

Eagle Pass: Samuel Schwartz

El Paso: Solomon Schutz (elected 1881); Adolph Krakauer (1889; had to resign when it was discovered that he was not yet a citizen); Adolph Solomon (1893-94)

Fort Worth: Bayard Friedman (1963-65)

Galveston: Michael Seeligson (1853); Isaac H. Kempner (1917-19); Adrian Levy (1935-39); Barbara Crews (1989); Eddie Schreiber

Jefferson: I.L. Goldberg; Ben Bloomingdale

Kaufman: Dr. Milton Davis (1989-91)

Laredo: Louis Franklin

Lockhart: Sam Glosserman

Luling: Ben Jacobs (elected 1936)

Marshall: Louis Kariel (1935-47); Audrey Kariel (1994-2001)

Nacogdoches: Adolphus Sterne (1831-33)

Padre Island: Minnie Solomonson (1982-86)

Plano: Florence Shapiro (1989)

Rosenberg: Henry Wertheimer (1986-88)

San Saba: Harry Shapiro

Schulenburg: Michael C. Levey (3 terms as mayor 1883-89); Hirsh Schwartz (1964-81)

Sherman: William Levy; Jake Levy

Temple: Augustus Lewy (1880s) – later served as D.A. of San Antonio

Waco: A.M. Goldstein (councilman 1930s-40s)

Wichita Falls: Max Kruger

Ysleta: I. Berg

Texas officials

J. E. Kaufman: legislator

Alex Sanger served as city alderman and president of the fire department (1873).

Abraham Cohen Labatt: Galveston alderman (1869-77)

I. Lovenberg: Galveston school board (30 years; president for 12 years) c. late 1800s

Jacob de Cordova: Houston alderman (1844, 1845), state representative from Harris County

Michael Seeligson: Galveston alderman (1840, 1848), state rep., 1st postmaster in Bee County

Adolphus Sterne: Nacogdoches district treasurer (early 1830s), state representative, state senator

Isadore Dyer: Galveston alderman (1854, 1861-62), county commissioner (during Civil War)

Felix Halff: Galveston alderman (elected 1875)

Ben Levy: Galveston city councilman (post-Civil War)

Joseph Levy: Galveston city councilman (post-Civil War)

Morris Lasker: Galveston school board member, state senator (post-Civil War)

Rabbi Abraham Blum: Galveston school board member (late 1800s)

Moritz Kopperl: alderman from Galveston's third ward (post-Civil War), Galveston representative to Texas state legislature (1876)

Adolph Cre[a]mer: Harris County sheriff (post-Civil War)

John Williamson Moses: Banquete justice of the peace (prior to Civil War)

Joseph Landa: Comal County justice of the peace (1850s)

Isaac Sanger: Parker County district clerk (1860s)

Israel Leavitt: Cass County clerk (1800s)

Rudolph Oscar: Calvert city councilman (1880)

William Levy: Sherman alderman

Jacob Guggenheim: Yorktown postmaster (1866-71)

Louis Lichtenstein: Clinton postmaster (1867-68)

Rudolph Frank: Cuero (DeWitt County) postmaster (1870s, 1880)

Louis Zork: San Antonio alderman (1850s), Bexar County treasurer (1856-65)

G. A. Levi: Victoria school board (late 1800s)

J. K. Hexter: Victoria city council president, mayor pro tempore (late 1800s)

Julius Henry: Corpus Christi alderman and postmaster (1800s)

David Hirsch: Nueces County commissioner; fire dept. chief (1886-88); pres., Board of Education

G. M. Raphael: served as acting mayor during his tenure as alderman for Brownsville (1870s)

Solomon Asheim: Cameron County treasurer (late 1800s)

Bernard Kowalski: Brownsville postmaster (1886)

Thomas Jefferson Barthelo: Cameron County sheriff (1800s)

Sigmund Loeb: Dallas alderman (1883), mayor pro tempore (1888-91)

Samuel Klein: Dallas alderman (1880s)

Charles Kahn: Dallas alderman (1880s)

Leo Woolfson: Dallas alderman (1880s-1900)

B. W. Applebaum: Texarkana city council (1870s)

Louis Josephs: served 3 terms as a state representative from Miller County (Texarkana), beginning in 1913; elected municipal judge in 1925 (served 10 years)

Leon Jacobs: Luling school board president

C. Block: Texarkana city council (1870s)

Mayer Levy: Sherman delegate to congressional and gubernatorial conventions (1870s)

J. Lowenburg: Deeds Commissioner (1870s)

Joseph Schutz: El Paso alderman (1873)

Emanuel M. Tillman: Dallas city councilman (1879-82)

Hattie L. Henenburg: named special justice of the Texas Supreme Court (1925)

Henry Dannenbaum: District Court judge (1915-19), and Houston school board pres. (1912-14)

Reuben Williams: State Highway and State Insurance

Commissioner (1940s)

Bayard Friedman: Fort Worth city councilman (1962)

In addition to the three men elected as mayor, twelve Jewish men held other public offices in El Paso during the final two decades of the nineteenth century. This list includes brothers Solomon, Samuel and Joseph Schutz, Adolphus Krakauer, Benjamin Schuster, S.L. Kahn, Samuel Friedenthal, A. Solomon, E. Kohlberg, S. Blumenthal, Ben Levy, and Nathan Lapowski.

Virginia Mayors

Alexandria: Henry Strauss (1886, 1891, 1893); Lewis Stein (1915); Leroy S. Bendheim (1957). By 1890 in Alexandria, there had been a number of Jews on the city council.

Danville: Samuel Kushner (1984-86)

Falls Church: Herman Funk

Harrisonburg: Lawrence Loewner (late 1940s)

Newport News: Harry Reyner; Joe Frank (2005)

Richmond: Solomon Jacobs (1814-15, acting mayor); Jacob I. Cohen (1819, actg. mayor)

Virginia Beach: Meyera Ellenson Oberndorf (1988-2008)

Winchester: Charles Zuckerman (1980s)

Virginia officials

Moses N. Cardozo (1755-1818): Jailor, Powhatan County Courthouse (Richmond), 1805

Benjamin Wolfe: Richmond city council (1816)

M. L. Straus: Richmond city council (late 1800s)

Julius Straus: Richmond city council (late 1800s)

Joseph Wallerstein: Richmond city council (late 1800s)

Clifford Weil: Richmond city council (late 1800s)

Jacob I. Cohen: Richmond city magistrate (1790) and acting mayor (1819)

Benjamin A. Banks: state legislator from Norfolk

William Lovenstein: Va. House of Delegates (1869-80)

Alfred Moses: Richmond Board of Education (1870-71)

Jacob Ezekiel: Richmond city council (1860-71)

Jacob A. Levy: Richmond city council (1871)

Sol Bloomberg: pres., Richmond city council (1902)

Marx Gunst: Richmond city council (1905-8)

Godfrey May: Petersburg delegate, Va. House of Delegates (1874-75)

A.S. Reinach: Petersburg city council (c. 1877)

Isidor Reinach: Petersburg justice of the peace (c. 1876-77)

Julius Liebert: Street Commissioner (c. 1876-77)

Forty Acres & The Jews: “Heirs of the Slave Baron”?

Non-southerners are stunned to learn that the South ever had any Jews at all.

—Eli Evans

That Jews were well established in the American South is clear. And though their numbers were small, they performed critical roles as lawmakers and civic leaders within the plantation culture. Two false but enduring notions by now have been put to rest: (1) that Blacks actually experienced any form of freedom, justice, or equality in the South after the Civil War and (2) that Jews avoided settling in the South because of its culture of extreme racism. Blacks continued to suffer the same conditions they had experienced since their arrival in America, while Jews joined other whites in finding complete acceptance and generous social benefits.

The question we now examine is, What was the Jewish role within the highly racialized plantation *economy* that characterized the South? What was the nature of the contact between Blacks and Jews in the economic arena and how did this relationship affect their individual development? We explore these issues from the moment of the so-called

emancipation of the slaves.

At the end of the Civil War a radical idea was circulated in America that fixed itself in the minds of the more than four million Black former slaves.[501] Gen. Oliver O. Howard (for whom Howard University was named) first leaked the notion that the newly freed Africans could expect to receive "forty acres and a mule" in compensation for fifteen generations of forced, unpaid toil. The rumor spread like wildfire among the long-suffering and deserving Blacks, but it was never to be. In reality, the United States government never intended to "give" land—the foundation of true freedom—to any of its former slaves. The plan was for Blacks to be given the opportunity to *buy* forty-acre lots after working the land for three years. Other legislative proposals were also circulated, none achieving the promise of true landownership for Blacks. And though some ex-slaves were settled on 40-acre farms, the land was quickly seized by whites and restored to the former slaveholders.

The Southern Homestead Act of 1866 opened up 46 million acres in five Southern states for ex-slaves and Union veterans, but only about 1,000 Blacks ever received title to land, which most often consisted of uncleared woodlands or "refuse tracts" of the poorest quality.[502]

Still, within America's fertile Southern heartland were tens of millions of slave-cultivated acres that had been the cornerstone of the American cotton economy. That land rightfully, morally, and logically belonged to the Black former slaves and the displaced Native American survivors of U.S. government genocide. In fact, Blacks were already on the land and had been working it for generations. And while Blacks never could claim any of the vast plantations they called home, the

question remains—*Who did?*

A generation after slavery's end, the renowned Black scholar W.E.B. Du Bois specifically headed to the Georgia countryside to study the Black condition for his classic work *The Souls of Black Folk*. He made his way to Dougherty County, a farming region and home to ten thousand Blacks, who outnumbered whites by five to one. He observed the many ethnic groups collected in the region and found immigrant Jews well entrenched in the affairs of this very Black Southern township. His indictment is troubling:

> The Jew is the heir of the slave-baron in Dougherty; and as we ride westward, by wide stretching cornfields and stubby orchards of peach and pear, we see on all sides within the circle of dark forest a Land of Canaan. Here and there are tales of projects for money-getting, born in the swift days of Reconstruction —"improvement" companies, wine companies, mills and factories; nearly all failed, and the Jew fell heir.[503]

"The Jew fell heir," says Du Bois, whose rebuke of the "shrewd and unscrupulous Jews"[504] was one of the first eyewitness testimonies describing the nature of the Black–Jewish relationship. But Du Bois was not just some casual observer: he was the preeminent Black intellectual in his time; he was a Harvard-trained scholar; and he was a keen observer of the racial dynamics in the Reconstruction era and beyond. He would become a prolific writer, authoring many a treatise on issues concerning race in America and around the world. He was a lifelong respecter of Jews, and, according to Dr. Benjamin Sevitch,

> [N]o black voice was heard more often, more eloquently, and for a longer period of time than W.E.B. Du Bois in his denunciation of anti-Semitism and his praise of Jewish people in general.[505]

A decade after his Georgia revelation, Du Bois would become the NAACP's top Black official.

Du Bois's forceful charge that Jews—as opposed to any other identifiable group of Americans—were the "heir of the slave-baron" is a shocking revelation that cannot be easily dismissed. What did this careful and thoughtful academic see and experience that would cause him to issue such a boldly specific accusation against a people widely considered to be the "best friends of the Black man"?[506]

The fact is Du Bois was experiencing firsthand a part of history deliberately hidden for more than a century. The Blacks of Dougherty County, like Blacks all over the South, upon "emancipation" fell victim to one of the greatest financial injustices in American history.[507] Within a short time after slavery, whites had established a new plantation system that was intentionally designed to block and ultimately destroy the ex-slave's every avenue toward freedom. Through this system, the same land that was once owned by white planters, and promised (and owed) to freed Blacks, was promptly seized by white immigrant merchants, many of them Jewish, using the leverage provided by repressive Jim Crow laws and government-sanctioned racial violence. This very same scheme that made Blacks the poorest of the poor was, at the very same time and in the very same place, making a new class of immigrant merchants the richest of the rich.

Du Bois's report could not be obscured in euphemism and in fact described a condition very much like slavery:

> Nearly all the lands belong to Russian Jews; the overseers are white, and the cabins are bare board-houses scattered here and there. The rents are high, and day-laborers and "contract" hands abound.[508]

The U.S. government's 1901 report of the Industrial Commission on Immigration confirmed that "Nine-tenths of the storekeepers in Dougherty County are Jewish merchants—some Russian and German Jews, but most of them Polish Jews."[509] And many other disinterested *white* observers saw essentially the same thing. Edward King surveyed the South for *Scribner's* magazine in 1873–74, some twenty years before Du Bois's arrival, and independently verified the Jewish presence on an even broader scale:

> The shrewd Hebrew, who has entered into the commerce of the South in such a manner as almost to preclude Gentile competition, understands the freedman very well, and manages him in trade….The Hebrew merchants have large establishments in all the planting districts. In Mississippi and in some other sections they have made more than 100 percent retail profit….In short, in some sections the Hebrew is the taskmaster, arbiter and guardian of the planters' destinies.[510]

The post–Civil War economic system that

emerged in the regions with the highest concentrations of Blacks and that was described so vividly by Dr. Du Bois, Mr. King, and others, remains an entirely unexplored aspect of Black–Jewish history. Who actually acquired the 40 acres, the mules, the cotton, and the wealth promised to the "emancipated" Black man and woman? And exactly how was this incredible advantage achieved? Who were the new chattel slaves, and who were the *heirs of the slave baron?*

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501 Of these, approximately 3 million were 10 years of age and older, 2 million of whom worked the land. See Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery* (New York: Random House, Ballantine Books, 2005), xxvi, 10, 26.

502 One acre of land is slightly smaller than a football field. Paul A. Cimbala and Randall M. Miller, *The Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction* (New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 1999), xxi, xxiv; Martin Abbott, "Free Land, Free Labor, and the Freedmen's Bureau," *Agricultural History* 30 (Oct. 1956): 150-56. See also Walter L. Fleming, "'Forty Acres and a Mule,'" *North American Review* 182 (1906): 721-37; Paul W. Gates, "War's Aftermath," chap. 14 in *Agriculture and the Civil War* (New York: Knopf, 1965), 356-79. It should be noted that through several U.S. government programs white immigrants were *given* millions of acres of prime farmland. Whiteness was in fact the *only* requirement.

503 W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903; reprint, New York: Gramercy Books, 1994), 97.

504 Ibid., 130.

505 Benjamin Sevitch, "W.E.B. Du Bois and Jews: A Lifetime of Opposing Anti-Semitism," *Journal of African American History* 87 (summer 2002): 323-37; and Benjamin Sevitch, "W.E.B. Du Bois as America's Foremost Black Zionist," in *The Souls of W.E.B. Du Bois: New Essays and Reflections,* eds. Edward J. Blum and Jason R. Young (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 2009), 233-53.

506 Du Bois's *Souls of Black Folk* was published in 1903, and Jews were troubled by its pointed indictment. Four prominent Jews—Wall Street financier and NAACP supporter Jacob Schiff, New York rabbi Stephen Wise, and historians Herbert Aptheker and Morris U. Schappes—pressured Du Bois to alter several passages of the book that referred to Jewish economic activity. The Jews who objected mentioned no factual error. Instead, they expressed fear of the effect those facts would have on the Black–Jewish relationship and on the Jewish image in the post-Nazi era. At first outraged, but then compliant, Du Bois changed the term "Jew" to "foreigner" and "immigrant" in the 1952 edition, thus concealing the Jewish presence

in the post-slavery Southern economy.

A transcript of Du Bois's letter to Aptheker on the issue is in Herbert Aptheker, ed., *The Correspondence of W.E.B. Du Bois* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1978), 3:343-44, in which Du Bois, disingenuously perhaps, distances himself from his original statement, claiming, "I took the word of my informants, and I am now wondering if in fact Russian Jews in any number were in Georgia at that time." According to Jewish historian Steven Hertzberg, there was a "mass influx" of Russian Jews to Georgia in the decade that Du Bois toured the region. See his *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978), 35, 73-97. Also, "Hebrews of Atlanta: The Important Part They Have Taken," *AC*, 12 Jan. 1890, 16.

A detailed history of Du Bois's revisions is given in Herbert Aptheker, "The Souls of Black Folk: A Comparison of the 1903 and 1952 Editions," *Negro History Bulletin* 34 (June 1971): 15, 16, and in Henry Louis Gates's introduction to *The Souls of Black Folk*, by W.E.B. Du Bois (New York: Bantam Books, 1989), vii-xxix. In his 600-page book *Black Reconstruction in America* (1935), a work financed by the Jewish Rosenwald Fund, Du Bois avoids the issue altogether. In 2009 at the NAACP Centennial Convention, President Barack Obama honored Du Bois as "a man of towering intellect and a fierce passion for justice."

507 John Dittmer, *Black Georgia in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1977), 23-25.

508 Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk*, 102. Du Bois wrote in 1906 that Blacks were "under the new slavery of Negro labor," in his article "The Economic Future of the Negro," *Publications of the American Economic Association*, 3d ser., 7, no. 1 (Feb. 1906): 232.

509 House, *Report of the Industrial Commission on Immigration*, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1901, H. Doc. 184, vol. 15, L-LI.

510 Edward King, *The Great South* (1875; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1969), 274, 47, 160, 252, 314, and 331. Georgia businessman J.T. Holleman used similar language: He said "millions" of Black and white farmers "are today in bondage as completely as the serfs in Europe." See "Small Farmer Single-Shots Cotton Because Forced to It," *AC*, 29 Aug. 1914, 6. Also Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks: A Travel Guide and History*, vol. 2 (New York: Fleet Press, 1979), 162-63; Francis William Loring and Charles Follen Atkinson, *Cotton Culture and the South Considered with Reference to Emigration* (Boston, 1869), 17.

Jewish Business Presence in the Southern Black Belt

The entrepreneurial and business skills of this group made the words "Jew" and "shopkeeper" synonymous in the Southern mind…

—Jason Maoz, senior editor, *The Jewish Press*

Throughout the history of the Jewish diaspora, Gentiles have made a recurring observation about their Jewish neighbors. Gentiles often found themselves unable to purchase simple necessities on Jewish holy days, when, it appeared, most retail shops were closed for business. This infuriated some and fascinated others, sometimes instigating bouts of anti-Semitic resentment. But it also inspired a general awe of and reverence for Jewish commercial expertise and encouraged a host of Gentile aspirants and imitators.

At times this mercantile mastery is confirmed and even bragged about by Jewish scholars and commentators, and there is no shortage of historical examples to consider. France's King Louis the Pious, who ruled in the 800s A.D., had to change Lyon's

market day from Saturday—the Jewish Sabbath—to Sunday because Jews "dominated the local markets."[511] One thousand years later, in June of 1843, the American Jewish newspaper *Occident* printed an account of Jewish trade in Poland:

> The influence of the Jews on trade and commerce, is most to be recognized on Sabbaths and Jewish Festivals. For then there prevails, (not only in small but in many large places), a deep and solemn stillness, a truly Sabbath rest, scarcely visible even in protestant and religious England. The streets are almost deserted….From all this it is evident, that the trade of this country is in the hands of the Jews.[512]

The esteemed Jewish American attorney, Freemason, and B'nai B'rith president Simon Wolf wrote with evident pride:

> You need but look at the streets of the principal cities of the world on Jewish holidays, and you will at once see that trade is in mourning; the busy hum is hushed; everything is languid; the active brain, the quick, nervous decision, the daring, yet cautious, speculator is absent. Look at Spain and Ireland, and then at England, France, Germany and the United States…[513]

Given this pervasive trading presence in such disparate centers of world commerce, the appearance of Jewish merchants in the cotton- and sugar-rich American South—the very engine of the American *and world* economies—should not be

unexpected. There, the same Jewish commercial pattern Mr. Wolf found internationally has been similarly chronicled. On September 26, 1862, Virginia's *Alexandria Gazette* reported that on "the High Holy Days" of the Jews, "the closing of so many stores on King Street gave the town quite a dull appearance yesterday." And the same phenomenon was noted there for the next three years.[514] Tennessean Joseph Gronauer echoed the theme in 1870: "[W]hen the Jews have a holiday and their stores are closed, Memphis is dead."[515] So completely did Jews appear to dominate the retail trade in Texas that one writer observed in 1914 that on the Jewish New Year "in Galveston about four-fifths of all retail business houses were closed during the day."[516] A sociologist studying Indianola, Mississippi, during the 1930s found that

> The most vigorous competition which the white southern merchants experience is from Jews entering the community. It is said, "If there is a Jewish holiday, you cannot buy a pair of socks in this whole country," a remark which illustrates how complete the control of retail dry-goods trade by Jews is supposed to be.[517]

Out west the story was the same. In 1856, Jewish businesses had become so dominant in San Francisco that one Jewish lawyer commented that it was

> a matter of astonishment to all who see the large number of mercantile houses conducted by Israelites, being much greater, in proportion to the commerce, than in any other city in America.

When the weekly sailing of that city's mail boat fell on Yom Kippur in 1858, "the boat's departure was delayed until the next business day."[518] A Columbus, Georgia, newspaper reported in 1907 that it "looked odd to see so many stores closed" on the Jewish holiday. The number of closed businesses showed "how prominently the Jews are identified with the city's business life."[519]

The role of Jews in trade was both admired and detested: Jewish trade was sought after by governments seeking to enhance tax revenues and bolster their economies, but it was dreaded by the Gentile traders, who felt it hopeless to compete with the acknowledged masters of international trade. And armed with this expertise, Jewish merchants influenced the development of the post-slavery South and directly affected the freedom aspirations of the newly liberated Black man and woman, whose lives and labor contributed significantly to the Jews' enterprises.

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511 Emily Taitz, *The Jews of Medieval France: The Community of Champagne* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 30, 56. Also, Berthold Altmann, "Jews and the Rise of Capitalism: Economic Theory and Practice in a Westphalian Community," *Jewish Social Studies* 5 (1943): 164-74.

512 "News Items," *Occident* 1, no. 3, June 1843, Jewish-American History Documentation Foundation, 2005, http://www.jewish-history.com/Occident/volume1/june1843/news.html. Also see *UJE* (1948), s.v. "capitalism, role of Jews in." Ibid., 28-29, 30-31:

> In Eastern Europe there were very recently countries in which 90% or more of the trades was in Jewish hands; in some branches of trade and export they controlled the entire 100%.
>
> The percentage of the Jewish population engaged in commerce was 30 or 35 times as great as in other population groups.
>
> Here [Central Europe during the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries] they were pioneers in the primary stages of capitalist development and therefore held a dominant position in these cultural economic functions which may be called the nervous system of capitalist

economy. Banking, the stock market, export and import fall within this classification.

513 Simon Wolf, "The Influence of the Jews on the Progress of the World," in *Selected Addresses and Papers of Simon Wolf: A Memorial Volume, Together with a Biographical Sketch* (Cincinnati: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1926), 66. Dr. Harold Brackman of the Simon Wiesenthal Center calls Wolf "the closest approximation of a national spokesman that late nineteenth-century American Jewry had." See Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of Black-Jewish Relations Through 1900, Part 1" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1977), 337; Naomi Wiener Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States, 1830-1914* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1984), 29ff; Isaac Markens, *The Hebrews in America: A Series of Historical and Biographical Sketches* (1888; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1975), 139. According to Mark Twain, the Jew of England "gathered all lucrative enterprises into his hands; he was the king of commerce…" See his article "Concerning the Jews," *Harper's Magazine*, Sept. 1898; later published as *Concerning the Jews* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 1985), 18-19.

514 Beth El Hebrew Congregation, *125th Anniversary, 1859-1984* (Alexandria, 1984), 2; ISJL, "Charleston, South Carolina": "The stores on King Street, still dominated by Jewish merchants…"

515 Kathleen C. Berkeley, "Ethnicity and Its Implications for Southern Urban History: The Saga of Memphis, Tennessee, 1850-1880," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 50, no. 4 (winter 1991): 197-98; "Another Jewish Festival," *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, 19 Sept. 1866, 3.

516 Arnold Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends: Afro-Americans View the Immigrant* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 111, 113. For a reference to store and business closings in Beaumont, Texas, see *Beaumont Enterprise,* 24 Sept. 1881 and 1 Oct. 1881, quoted in W.T. Block, "A Brief History of the Early Beaumont Jewish Community," 1998-2008, http://www.wtblock.com/wtblockjr/JewishCommunity/Page3.htm. Concerning the impact of Jewish Holy Days on business in New York, see Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 2 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1991), 212.

517 John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1949; reprint, Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957*),* 129; Arnold Shankman, "Friend or Foe? Southern Blacks View the Jew," in *"Turn to the South": Essays on Southern Jewry*, eds. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1979), 106-7.

518 Henry J. Labatt, "Labatt on the Commercial Position of the Jews in California—1856," *Western States Jewish History* 29, no. 3 (1997): 175; Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *On Equal Terms: Jews in America, 1881-1981* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1982), 27; *The Western Journal of Isaac Mayer Wise, 1877,* ed. William M. Kramer (Berkeley, CA: Western Jewish History Center, 1974), 27, 33.

519 ISJL, "Columbus, Georgia."

Jewish Peddlers in the Deep South: Keeping Slavery in Business

Where there are no rice-fields there are no rice-birds; where there is no wild celery there are no canvas back ducks; where there is no trade there are no Jews.

—

Richmond Whig, 1866

At the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, Jews could boast of being everything from "Indian fighters," politicians, slave dealers and shippers, to auctioneers, bounty hunters, plantation owners, and, most prominently, merchants. They became a ubiquitous presence in the mid-nineteenth century, when peddling became the most lucrative occupation of the East European Jewish immigrants. Between 1840 and 1880, the Jewish population in the United States jumped from 15,000 to 250,000, with most of the new arrivals settling in the major Northern metropolises, especially New York.[520] But a significant minority (at least 7 percent of them) spied the economic opportunities in the Southern states and moved there in increasing numbers, joining the four to five million Blacks who were concentrated almost exclusively in

the region.[521]

Many of the newcomers had been petty traders and dealers of farming supplies and produce in the Old World agrarian economies, where they endured a web of government restrictions that hampered their enterprises.[522] The American South offered them an entirely new, welcoming environment where they encountered an utterly free and unregulated economic Disneyland.

Before the widespread establishment of permanent brick-and-mortar stores, a sizable portion of retailing in America was performed by a legion of traveling salesmen pushing their wares. Early on, New England-based "Yankee peddlers" dominated the occupation, but in the competition for Southern trade the New Englander proved no match for the Jewish immigrants arriving in overwhelming numbers. The well-stocked and experienced Jewish peddlers soon eclipsed the Yankees in numbers and scope of operations, hastening their decline.[523]

Upon arrival in America these Jewish newcomers made immediate connections with the Jewish manufacturers and wholesalers already established in the big Northern cities, connections that furnished them with employment, training, open lines of credit, territories to work in, and a supply of merchandise.[524]

The peddlers set out on foot with 100-pound backpacks, or with their mule teams and covered wagons, navigating the riverbanks, mountainsides, and forest trails, selling goods at mining and logging camps, river towns, and isolated farmhouses and plantations.[525] They quickly imbibed the peculiar folkways and the distinctive cultural and racial characteristics of the American Southlands while they carefully surveyed the commercial needs

and wants of the diverse peoples of the region.[526] They developed regular routes and were welcomed and appreciated by the Gentiles they served for the much-needed goods and services they brought. Some routes charted out by Jewish peddlers became so well-established and profitable that the routes themselves could be bought and sold.[527]

To the plantation South a visit from the "Jew peddler" was a much-anticipated event.[528] These peddlers brought a wide array of new and unique manufactured household goods, and, more important, they brought the desperately needed capital investment to an entirely underdeveloped agricultural economy in the form of credit, loans, and a willingness to barter when cash was scarce.[529] Jewish peddler Aaron Hirsch had "for sale everything from a needle to a farmer's wagon, horses and mules, and occasionally bought and sold a few slaves."[530] One of the largest slave traders in American history was Louisiana planter Isaac Franklin, a Gentile, whose cotton plantations covered thousands of acres. Records indicate that nearly sixty separate merchants served Franklin's business and personal needs in some form or other, providing everything from drugs, rope, and slaves' clothing, to food, tools, and dry goods.[531]

Once these dedicated itinerant retailers developed a dependable clientele of planters and slave owners, they opened country stores, which became the economic focal points of their adopted Dixie communities.[532] And from these stores they continued to supply the slave economy with critical financial services, infusing it with investment, creating and energizing markets for its valuable produce, and facilitating its expansion. Among the Gentile residents of the plantation South, the Jewish retailers became fixtures in the economic life of

every frontier community—the very lifeline to civilization—and they were most often hailed as no less than heroes.[533] And no wonder—it was through the Jewish peddlers that the flow of capital choked off by the Civil War flooded back into the South. By most accounts these traveling salesmen were accepted into the bosom of the white American South like Santa Claus on Christmas day.[534] To white Southerners the Jewish peddler was "a convenient door-to-door walking general store, a messenger boy, a mailman, a newspaper boy, an area town crier, etc."[535] It is no wonder, then, that the townspeople of Osceola, Arkansas, told the newly arrived Jewish family who had established a dry goods shop, "Now our town is complete—we have a Jew."[536] One aging white planter in Lexington, Mississippi, loved the visits of German immigrant peddler Jacob Sontheimer so much that he bequeathed to him 4,000 acres of prime plantation land and all the Black Africans he enslaved. Sontheimer happily accepted.[537]

By all accounts, the range of products offered through this distinctively Jewish supply network was remarkable for the time and was seemingly unlimited in scope and in quantity and unbeatable in price. Often these small retailers were the only supplier of necessities to their communities. They stocked dry goods, clothing, and footwear for whites and slaves alike. Hardware like pots, pans, knives and forks, hatchets and saws, farm supplies such as mules, horses, plows, saddles, rope, seeds and fertilizer, foodstuffs, tobacco, liquor, and pharmaceuticals[538]—and even Black Africans—were all obtained exclusively (in most cases) through these country retail conduits.[539]

Whatever product was needed in any distant wilderness in the region, the Jewish peddler could

tap into a vast network of his coreligionists in business to get that item to his customers. He often carried catalogues from which a multitude of products could be ordered and then purchased on the next sales call.[540] This well-financed and multi-leveled retail operation made the Jewish peddler a vital and therefore *protected* resource to all the settlers, and had the added significant benefit of deflecting any potential religious conflicts that may have been carried over from the Old World.

And these Jewish peddlers/merchants were not running a charity. The items destined for the South were intended to be sold at a profit of 100 to 200 percent or more. Robert Somers reported in 1871 that

> One firm in New York is said to make half a million of dollars in this lucrative business per annum, after giving, it may be supposed, a fair share of the spoils to the Hebrew agents...[541]

No sooner had Hayim Isaac Reznitzky stepped off the boat than his Jewish brethren in trade gave him a load of merchandise on credit, directed him to the county of Bertie, North Carolina, and authorized him to mark up his merchandise by a spectacular 400 percent.[542]

The rewards of this livelihood far outweighed the risks. One peddler figured it this way: He would extend credit to anyone he thought he could trust to pay for the item. If an item was priced at $5, he accepted $1 or $2 as the down payment and collected from the customer a tiny amount on the balance each week until the price was paid. According to his calculations, “The peddler *usually secured his cost of the item at the first payment*, the

balance being his profit." By this method, the peddler secured repeated opportunities to sell new products under the guise of "collection" visits, keeping these profitable relationships for years.[543] Jewish immigrants enjoyed exclusivity in the field and took full advantage of their monopoly status below the Mason–Dixon line.[544] A penniless immigrant could—and often did—obtain immeasurable wealth in less than a generation on American soil.[545]

Once immigrant Jews securely established their New World businesses, they replicated the process by supplying the endless stream of Jewish newcomers starting out in the peddling trade.[546] Ultimately, Jews were able to extend the reach of their family trading networks deep into the American wilderness, giving them a distinct advantage over all other competitors. As Dr. Henry L. Feingold put it, the

> early development of an intragroup system of credit, based on family ties, fraternal or social clubs, or even religious congregations…was a crucial factor, which more than anything else may account for the inordinate success of the immigrant generation in business.[547]

Additionally, *and just as important,* Jewish peddlers/merchants became the outposts through which the products of Black slave labor—sugar, molasses, corn, rice, and especially cotton—were exported out of the region, using the same Jewish network pipelines to profitably and efficiently market these products.[548]

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520 By 1915, one out of every four New Yorkers was a Jew and Jews represented between eight and ten percent of the population of

other urban centers like Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore.

521 Clive Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers in the Age of Jim Crow," *SJH* 2 (1999): 56.

522 Deborah R. Weiner, "The Jews of Clarksburg: Community Adaptation and Survival, 1900-60," *West Virginia History Journal* 54 (1995): 59-77.

523 Maxwell Whiteman, "Notions, Dry Goods, and Clothing: An Introduction to the Study of the Cincinnati Peddler," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 53 (April 1963): 307 n. 4; Walter P. Zenner, "American Jewry in the Light of Middleman Minority Theories," *Contemporary Jewry* 5, no. 1 (spring/summer 1980): 15; Avraham Barkai, *Branching Out: German-Jewish Immigration to the United States, 1820-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1994), 116-17. See also Mark I. Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity in Nineteenth-Century America: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830-1880" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Florida, 1997), 95; and Henry L. Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1982), 38. Also, E. Merton Coulter, *The South During Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1947), 202; Gemma Romain, "The Jews of Nineteenth Century Charleston: Ethnicity in a Port City," paper presented at Seascapes, Littoral Cultures, and Trans-Oceanic Exchanges, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., February 12-15, 2003, http://historycooperative.press.uiuc.edu/proceedings/seascapes/romain.html.

524 Elliott Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana, 1840-1875* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1988), 133; Wendy Lowe Besmann, *A Separate Circle: Jewish Life in Knoxville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2001), 29-31; Chaim Bermant, *The Jews* (New York: Times Books, 1977), 4-5; Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 19-20, 31-32. Also, Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 329, 331. For example, many North Carolina Jews got their start from Jacob Epstein's Baltimore Bargain House. See Leonard Rogoff, *Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2001), 75-76; ISJL, "Hickory, North Carolina."

525 These packs were known as *pekls* in the Jews' native Eastern European language of Yiddish. Ruth Scheinberg, "The Pekl: Folk Histories of Jewish Peddlers in the South, 1890-1914," (1980), 1, Old South Miscellany, MSS 49, Box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University; Elliott Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem: Jewish Businessmen in Louisiana, 1840-1875" (Ph.D. diss., George Washington Univ., 1983), 224, 225, 226. One peddler, Isaiah Isaacs, even helped finance Daniel Boone's surveys of Kentucky. Lee Shai Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-Town America: A History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2005), 37.

526 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 226: "Peddling provided an apprenticeship during which Jews became familiar with the supply lines and market conditions within the South."

527 Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 40. See, for

instance, the May 25, 1875, issue of the *Atlanta Daily Herald*:

> [N]othing is so indicative of a city's prosperity as to see an influx of Jews who come with the intention of living with you and especially as they buy property and build among you and because they are a thrifty and progressive people who never fail to build up a town they settle in; and again because they make good citizens, pay their obligations promptly, never refuse to pay their taxes and are law-abiding.

Quoted in Rabbi David Marx, *A History of the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation of Atlanta, Georgia* (Atlanta: Hebrew Benevolent Congregation, 1917), 15-16. As late as World War I, "Atlanta's $340 million in trade dwarfed its $41 million in manufacturing." See James C. Cobb, *Industrialization and Southern Society, 1877-1984* (Lexington, KY: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1984), 36.

528 Whiteman, "Notions, Dry Goods, and Clothing," 309; Harry Golden, *Our Southern Landsman* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), 158-59. The Jewish peddler was "given a place of honor in the middle of the floor" of rural homes. Thomas D. Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows: The Southern Country Store* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1944), 24.

529 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 224, 225; Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews,* 100, 132-33, 162; Mark K. Bauman, *The Southerner As American: Jewish Style* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1996), 10.

530 Marcus, *United States Jewry*, 2:65.

531 Stuart Bruchey, *Cotton and the Growth of the American Economy, 1790-1860: Sources and Readings* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967), 88. Dry goods are clothing, textiles, and notions as distinguished from hardware, groceries, and any articles of trade or retail/wholesale merchandise requiring refrigeration.

532 Stephen J. Whitfield, "Commercial Passions: The Southern Jew as Businessman," *AJH* 71 (March 1982): 344; Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880-1920*, vol. 3 of *The Jewish People in America*, ed. Henry L. Feingold (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992), 158. In "Hot Springs, Arkansas Remembers the 'Golden Age,'" *Circa* 11, no. 2 (summer 2002): 4, these stores are called "crucial links in the expanding market economy."

533 Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 344, 351. Most new colonies eagerly sought the presence of traders, who represented growth and development. A village could sustain a storekeeper, writes Ashkenazi, "but not those looking for manual labor." See his "Creoles of Jerusalem," 15. Also, J. H. Innes, *New Amsterdam and Its People: Studies, Social and Topographical, of the Town under Dutch and Early English Rule,* vol. 1 (New York: Ira J. Friedman, 1969), 85: "In so far as the Jews were merchants and capitalists, their presence was by no means unwelcome in the metropolis and larger cities of the Netherlands…" Barkai, *Branching Out*, 63, writes that the Jew came to be "treated as an honored guest by the plantation owners." Also, Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the*

Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s–1990s (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994), 152; Robert G. Athearn, *In Search of Canaan: Black Migration to Kansas, 1879-80* (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1978), 107-8. The editor of the *New Orleans Times* was effusive: "The southern people…have ever extended the hand of fellowship to this race."

534 See Deborah R. Weiner, "The Jews of Clarksburg: Community Adaptation and Survival, 1900-60," *West Virginia History Journal* 54 (1995), 59-77: "We…had Jewish peddlers that came occasionally and gave us something to look forward to. It was almost like having Santa Claus come, even if Mother couldn't afford to buy much. We loved to see the big bundle opened up, for we seldom saw new things." Also, Dana Evan Kaplan, "The Determination of Jewish Identity below the Mason-Dixon Line: Crossing the Boundary From Gentile to Jew in the Nineteenth-Century American South," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 52, no. 1 (spring 2001): 101.

535 Louis Schmier, "'For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough': A Jewish Peddler and His Black Customers Look at Each Other," *AJH* 73, no. 1 (Sept. 1983): 46; Lu Ann Jones, "Gender, Race, and Itinerant Commerce in the Rural New South," *JSoHis* 66, no. 2 (May 2000): 297-98.

536 LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 259; Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 17, 41; Schmier, *Jews of the South*, 2.

537 Robert Lewis Berman, *A House of David in the Land of Jesus* (2007), 37ff. Sontheimer was sued by the man's family and lost many of the Africans, but he was able to keep the land. He sold 2,800 acres and invested the proceeds in a store, ultimately becoming one of the largest cotton planters *and* retailers in the state.

538 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 1, 20, 28, 38. The Jewish-owned *New York Times* reported ("The Growing Menace of the Use of Cocaine," *NYT Magazine,* 2 Aug. 1908) that "Jew peddlers" were selling cocaine to Blacks, which the paper claimed was creating health and crime problems. "It was easily available in patent medicines and popular among Negroes in the South, where 'Jew peddlers' sold it to them." Cocaine was "popular" as a stimulant for field workers, who used the drug to stave off hunger and boost their physical capacity for the grueling plantation labor. See Lester Grinspoon and James B. Bakalar, *Cocaine: A Drug and Its Social Evolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), 38; David T. Courtwright, "The Hidden Epidemic: Opiate Addiction and Cocaine Use in the South, 1860-1920," *JSoHis* 49, no. 1 (Feb. 1983): 67. Salikoko S. Mufwene, "Number Delimitation in Gullah," *American Speech* 61, no. 1 (spring 1986): 46, notes the following Gullah language reference: "They went to the Jew's store to buy gunjuh [marijuana], nic-nac crackers, *and the like*."

Tel Aviv University professor Robert A. Rockaway wrote that after the First World War, "Jewish criminals financed and directed much of the nation's narcotics traffic." See his "Hoodlum Hero: The Jewish Gangster as Defender of His People, 1919-1949," *AJH* 82 (1994): 215. The term "junkie," which is now associated with drug addiction, was once a term describing "Jew peddlers," many of whom sold scraps and junk in low-income areas. See Amy Godine, "Peddling

Tales," *Moment*, 2001, http://www.momentmag.com/archive/feb00/olam2.html; Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 29. There has also been negative comment on the role of these merchants supplying liquor, in Robert Somers, *The Southern States Since the War, 1870-71* (1871; reprint, University, AL: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1965), 245-46; and Steven Hertzberg, "The Jewish Community of Atlanta: From the End of the Civil War until the Eve of the Frank Case," *AJHQ* 62, no. 3 (March 1973): 283. Merchants in the slave states were forbidden to supply this immensely profitable commodity to the enslaved Blacks, but the peddler was charged with developing stealthy evasions of this law. Barkai claims that "there is probably some grain of truth in [this] report." See his *Branching Out*, 63-64. Also, Bauman, *The Southerner As American*, 18.

539 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 118, 92. Also Ewa Morawska, *Insecure Prosperity: Small-Town Jews in Industrial America, 1890-1940* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1996), 31; Kenneth Libo and Irving Howe, *We Lived There Too* (New York: St. Martins, 1984), 150; and "Jewish Plantation Life," in *Cultural Corridors: Discovering Jewish Heritage Along the Mississippi River* (Jackson, MS: Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 1998).

540 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 33.

541 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 151; Harold D. Woodman, *King Cotton and His Retainers: Financing and Marketing the Cotton Crop of the South, 1800–1925* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1968; reprint, Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1990), 170.

542 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 10. See also the autobiographical account by Jewish immigrant Abraham Bisno, in his *Union Pioneer* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1967), 45-47.

543 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 19-20; Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 39.

544 By nature the movements of peddlers are hard to track, but there are some statistics about Jewish peddlers in America. In one area of Pennsylvania in 1840, 46 percent of Jews were peddlers, 70 percent in 1845, 55 percent in 1850, 59 percent in 1855, 39 percent in 1860 and 12 percent in 1870. The diminishing percentage may be due to the swift transformation of Jewish peddlers into storeowners. See Eric E. Hirshler, ed., *Jews from Germany in the United States* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1955), 59-60; Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 39. Barry Supple plainly stated that "it seems possible that by 1860 a majority of the peddlers in the United States were Jewish." See his "A Business Elite: German-Jewish Financiers in Nineteenth-Century New York," *Business History* 31 (1957): 151. Jewish merchant and writer David L. Cohn wrote that "the [Mississippi] Delta's first peddlers were Jews." James C. Cobb, ed., *The Mississippi Delta and the World: The Memoirs of David L. Cohn* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1995), 89. In 1854, in Alexandria, Louisiana, there were about twenty Jewish peddlers "roaming about." See Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 228; Barkai, *Branching Out*, 116-17. In the Adirondacks, there may have been as

many as 200 Jewish peddlers. But Amy Godine says that "It's tough to say how many Jews peddled nationwide." Godine, "Peddling Tales." Also, Hasia Diner, "Entering the Mainstream of Modern Jewish History: Peddlers and the American Jewish South," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History,* eds. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 95, 104; Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 19-24. Maxwell Whiteman says that about the time of the Civil War the roads along the Delaware River "were clogged by Jewish peddlers." See his "Philadelphia's Jewish Neighborhoods," in *The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Groups and Lower-Class Life, 1790-1940*, eds. Allen F. Davis and Mark H. Haller (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1973), 234. Also, Lu Ann Jones, *Mama Learned Us to Work: Farm Women in the New South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2002), 190 n. 5. Also, Priscilla Fishman, ed., *The Jews of the United States* (New York: Quadrangle, 1973), 19, says there were "thousands" of Jewish peddlers. Allan Tarshish, "The Economic Life of the American Jew in the Middle Nineteenth Century," in *Essays in American Jewish History* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1958), 264, estimates that by 1860 there were more than 16,000 peddlers in the United States, "most of whom were Jewish." Also, Rudolph Glanz, "Notes on Early Jewish Peddling in America," *Jewish Social Studies* 7 (1945): 120.

545 See Diner, "Entering the Mainstream," 103-4.

546 Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 344; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 211; Carolyn Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all': The Folklore and Culture of Southern Jews" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana Univ., 1986), 41; Rowena Olegario, "'That Mysterious People': Jewish Merchants, Transparency, and Community in Mid-Nineteenth Century America," *Business History Review* 73, no. 2 (summer 1999): 167; Diner, "Entering the Mainstream," 96-99, 100; Marcus M. Spiegel, *Your True Marcus: The Civil War Letters of a Jewish Colonel,* eds. Frank L. Byrne and Jean P. Soman (Kent, OH: Kent State Univ. Press, 1985), 8.

547 Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 38.

548 E. N. Elliott, *Cotton is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments* (Augusta, Ga., 1860), 124.

Jewish Peddlers: Collaboration with Slavery

The key to the success of these Jewish merchants is that they did not threaten the existing racial order in word or in deed, and served, by their very presence, to reinforce the Biblical rightness of the slave system. Whereas they were once seen as scriptural rebels by European Christian peasantry, in the American South the Jewish merchants offered no challenge or resistance to the word of Christ; they were even known to market Christianity, some selling crosses and rosaries to the Bible Belt faithful.[549] Laredo, Texas, peddler Albert Granoff began his retail business by selling Catholic pictures and religious items in Latino barrios. Charles Blum peddled in the Mississippi Delta, finally opening a store and giving away free Christian hymnals and Bibles that were "suitable for Baptist or Methodist"—with purchases over $2.50 and $5 respectively. He gave away a picture of the Last Supper to the church with the most votes in a newspaper promotional contest he ran. Memphis merchant Jacob Goldsmith started the "Spirit of Christmas" parade, and tens of thousands of Atlantans have regularly attended the lighting of the great Christmas tree at Jewish-owned Rich's department store.[550] Israel Goldberg, speaking of what drove these Jewish traders, said that "[N]o trader can prosper who openly opposes the politics of his customers."[551] And it was just that simple.

Thus, with no anti-Semitism to impede them and with immense profits to be made, these Jewish peddlers *had no reason* to oppose slavery—openly or otherwise. In fact, they did their best to maintain and protect it, becoming an essential part of the slavocracy, seeing the system itself as just another lucrative business opportunity. Each Southern

plantation was its own feudal territory lorded over by the white planter, with its own laws and internal means of production.[552] With their regular supply schedule, peddlers eased this burden of self-sufficiency and made settlement of the slave South much more tenable, profitable, and widespread. To the slave system, the peddler was pivotal, for without his vital services the cotton economy would have certainly collapsed. The *Negro History Bulletin* was remarkably clear on this point:

> The presence of the southern Jews compl[e]mented the system of slavery; their mercantilistic interest made slavery a more effective labor system. While most Jews were not to be found on plantations, their activities made the plantation a self-sufficient unit. What was not produced on the plantation was delivered by Jewish merchants. *The southern Jew had as much, if not more, to gain by maintaining the system of slavery as any other white segment within the South*. During the Civil War Jews defended the system which insured them acceptance and success in the South. Neither the Civil War nor Reconstruction changed the southern Jews' perception of Blacks as an animal to be used and exploited.[553]

Life on the road made the Jewish peddlers effective sentries patrolling for escaped Black slaves. Rabbi Bertram W. Korn wrote that Jewish merchants Betsy and Louis Kokernot "seem to have caught an inordinate number of runaway Negroes, *or stopped Negroes carrying money without the proper identification*."[554] Frederick Law Olmsted, the nineteenth-century traveler, remarked on this

aspect of the peddler trade:

> There are a few Jew-Germans in Texas, and, in Texas, the Jews, as everywhere else, speculate in everything—in popular sympathies, prejudices, and bigotries, in politics, in slavery. Some of them own slaves, others sell them on commission, and others have captured and returned fugitives.[555]

Olmsted described an incident in which a Jewish peddler returned from a sales excursion:

> The trail soon left the road, and he followed it cautiously, to an overgrown gully, where he found his fugitive, overcome with sleep. The poor wretch yielded without a word, only begging for something to eat. But the Jew was too wise not to keep the muscular advantage he had over a negro faint and sick with hunger, and tying his hands behind him, drove him before him to the road. The prostration of the fellow was so extreme, however, that the task of driving him in to settlements would be tedious; and, after a short distance, the Jew mounted his feeble prize behind him, joining his ankles firmly together by a handkerchief, beneath the mule's belly. For a time, all went well—the Jew vigilant and merry, revolver in hand. But there came the Nueces [River] to cross; the mule would drink; the bridle goes loose; the spark of liberty suddenly kindles, and headlong, over the mule's head, goes Jew, revolver, and all, floundering under the feet of the

> frightened animal. Up the bank goes a stampede of mule and crouching runaway, securely tied together, the bags of dollars and provision not even left to the dripping speculator. The Jew is the only one of the party that has ever again been heard from.[556]

Maybe the most valuable service provided by the Jewish peddlers was that they "brought news as well as merchandise" to populations that were virtually incommunicado. News of the outside world—of wars, of politics, of culture, of business—was invaluable to the inhabitants of isolated settlements and vast plantations. Just as important was the news the peddlers would *not* bring into the South. They dutifully censored literature that challenged the peculiar Southern racial ideology. Abolitionist pamphlets were of particular concern to white Southerners, and Jewish peddlers did their part to keep messages of hope and freedom out of the hands and minds of the suffering Black slaves or from whites who might be inclined to help.[557]

Wholesale grocer E. Salomon, a member of the Louisiana legislature, introduced a bill in 1860 to control the activities of peddlers, using as his motive the ludicrous claim that a peddler who had recently died was found to have letters from the notorious abolitionist John Brown. In Salomon's mind, this posed a large enough threat to "southern institutions" to warrant draconian legislation banning all peddlers from his state.[558] But Salomon need not have worried. The peddlers supplied to the South only those items useful to vitalize—not destroy—the slave-based economy,[559] and whatever was left over they sold or traded to plantation-bound Blacks.[560] Peddler Lazarus Straus claimed he was fully welcomed by the white slave-owners and

their families, provided only "that the peddler proved himself an honorable, upright man." Straus, like most Jewish peddlers, felt it an honor when he was allowed board and lodging and food for his horses. "The peddler in turn usually made a gift to either the lady or the daughter."

Julius Weis stopped at what he called a "nice little plantation" with forty enslaved Africans owned by a white woman who "treated me very kindly."

> In the evening she sent word to the negroes at the quarters, that if any of them wanted to buy anything, to come to the house. Many of them came up. I opened my goods on the gallery, and she stayed to watch them, so that they would not steal anything. I did very well, and felt happy at the result.[561]

Weis's life as a peddler and merchant was extraordinarily lucrative. In 1865, he settled in New Orleans, where he became a banker and cotton commission agent, and "one of the most distinguished Jews of the city."[562]

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549 Isabel Boiko Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism: Negroes and Jews in New York, 1880 to World War II" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of New Mexico, 1973), 12; Albert S. Lindemann, *The Jew Accused* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 227, 229. Once established in department store retailing, Jews such as Texans Abe Josey and Paul Levyson advertised "heavily for the Christmas trade." Marilyn Kay Cheatham Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric: Nineteenth-Century Jewish Merchants Living Texas Reality and Myth" (Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M Univ., 2003), 125. The "Bible Belt"—that area of America where Christian Evangelical Protestantism is a pervasive or dominant part of the culture—is generally considered to cover much of the area stretching from Texas in the southwest, northwest to Kansas, northeast to part of Virginia, and southeast to northern Florida.

550 Bryan Edward Stone, "West of Center: Jews on the Real and Imagined Frontiers of Texas" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Texas at Austin,

2003), 234; Ted Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi: Consumers, Poverty, and Culture, 1830-1998* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1999), 23; Leo E. Turitz and Evelyn Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi* (1983; reprint, Jackson, MS: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1995), 59-60; Leonard Rogoff, *Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2001), 29; Stephen J. Whitfield, *Voices of Jacob, Hands of Esau: Jews in American Life and Thought* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1984), 244.

551 Rufus Learsi, *The Jews in America: A History* (New York: KTAV, 1972), 91. Israel Goldberg's pen name was Rufus Learsi.

552 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 44. One post-slavery Jewish peddler stated that, to his great surprise, "there were many Jewish men owning plantations, which was not well-known." See also *JEncy* (1901), s.v. "agriculture."

553 Emphasis ours. Oscar R. Williams, Jr., "Historical Impressions of Black-Jewish Relations Prior to World War II," *Negro History Bulletin* 40, no. 4 (1977): 728.

554 Emphasis ours. This reinforces several facts: that money was seen as a real threat in Black hands, whether slave or "free," that the movements of *all* Blacks were specifically and strictly regulated, *and* that Jews helped to enforce these diabolical laws. Moreover, at least in this case, they saw the practice as just another revenue stream. See Bertram Wallace Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 170-71. The case of peddler-turned-slave owner Julius Weis is discussed in Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 20. "Proper identification" predates the practices of Nazi Germany by a century. This trade was so plainly identified with Jews that Harriet Beecher Stowe made her slavecatcher Jewish, giving him the name "Mr. Marks," in her famous anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852).

555 Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas* (1857; reprint, Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1978), 329. See also a reference to a soldier named Levy who was said to be "hunting slaves," in *Voices From Slavery,* ed. Norman R. Yetman (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970), 203.

556 Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas*, 330-31.

557 Lee M. Friedman, "The Problems of Nineteenth Century American Jewish Peddlers," *PAJHS* 44 (1954-1955): 1. See Melvin M. Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo: Economic Thought in the Antebellum South* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1966), 176.

558 Lewis E. Atherton, "Itinerant Merchandising in the Ante-Bellum South," *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 19, no. 113 (Feb. 1945): 58, 52.

559 "The trades in which Jews engaged," Ashkenazi writes, involved "selling to plantations and other town dwellers." See his "Creoles of Jerusalem," 250.

560 Whiteman, "Notions, Dry Goods, and Clothing," 321. This raises the spectre that those few enslaved Africans who were allowed to earn some wages were forced to pay for necessities, which they

probably obtained through transactions with peddlers. This is most likely where the peddlers first gained their knowledge of the exploitability of the Black slave, whose knowledge of commerce was strictly limited. Clive Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations in the American South, 1790-1970" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Cambridge, 1997), 39:

> Moreover, there is no guarantee that some Jewish peddlers did not trade with slaves simply because they were easy to exploit. The temptation to sell ignorant slaves shoddy products that no white person would touch, may have been one too strong for every peddler to resist.

561 Barkai, *Branching Out*, 62-63; "Oscar Solomon Straus: A German Immigrant in Georgia," in *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, ed. Jacob Rader Marcus (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 2:287ff; "Julius Weis: Peddler in the Deep South," in *Memoirs of American Jews,* 2:47ff; Roland Flade, *The Lehmans: From Rimpar to the New World, A Family History* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1996), 45. Consider how a Black merchant might be perceived if he had left a Nazi concentration camp overcome with such a sense of fondness and nostalgia.

562 Barkai, *Branching Out*, 62. It should be noted here that the phrase "nice little Nazi concentration camp" could never, ever be uttered or scrawled without a forceful and well-deserved condemnation. Also, another immigrant peddler, Aaron Hirsch, "spoke up for slavery because the plantation owners had been kind to him." See Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 20; Harry Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War* (New York: Arco, 1963), 278-85.

A Note on Southern Merchants & Black Bondage

Jewish merchants serving every need of the plantation also supplied the bondage hardware that bound the Black slave to the cruel system of forced lifelong labor.[563] The bull whips, chains, steel collars, hand and foot cuffs, thumbscrews, shackles and locks, and other implements of torture and captivity, were as necessary to the white plantation owner, jailer, and slave patrollers as any other commodity. As far as is known, there were no merchants who handled these items exclusively, so it is very likely that the merchants who sold cottonseed, clothing, mules, and slaves also sold these cruel devices of enslavement.

It is documented that Jewish merchants marketed items that supported the slavocracy and aided in the ongoing genocide of the Native American. According to Rabbi I. Harold Sharfman, they sold smallpox-laden blankets to the Indians; bills of sale uncovered by Jacob R. Marcus show sales of "scalping knives" to the white settlers. And, as "the largest ship chandlers in the entire Caribbean region," they outfitted slave ships to be floating Africa-bound dungeons. Jews supplied weapons of war to the colonial militaries that nearly wiped out the Indians, and in the post–Civil War era (as we shall see) they sold sheets and guns to the Ku Klux Klan—all as a matter of commercial enrichment.[564]

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563 Jews operated large slave pens and auction houses, and outfitted slave ships with leg irons, handcuffs, and other bondage hardware. See Nation of Islam, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* vol. 1 (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 1991), 101, 121, 234, 263, 293, and passim.

564 Nation of Islam, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* vol. 1 (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 1991), 29-30, 87, 108, 111-12, 121, 140, 142, 162, 190, 209-10, 216-18, 224, 230, 251, 252, 254, 257, 279, 291, 304-5. Also, see this volume's chapter titled "Jews,

Lynching, and the Ku Klux Klan."

Let Us Prey: Jewish Merchants "Swarm" the South

[T] he merchants were not harmed. The fact that they controlled the only available source of credit made them invulnerable.

—Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*

The sheer number of observers testifying to the predominance of Jewish merchants operating below the Mason–Dixon line is considerable. And this, despite the fact that their numerical presence in the larger white population remained infinitesimal, probably never exceeding one percent. As the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience rightly acknowledges, "The impact of small town Jewish families on their communities far exceeds their relatively small numbers."[565]

The witnesses to this Jewish phenomenon represent a cross-section of the American population, including Jews and Gentiles, Blacks and whites, government officials, travelers, businessmen, historians, and ordinary citizens. Their comments about this Jewish omnipresence at the core of the Southern economy reflect a mixture of marvel, contempt, envy, indifference, admiration,

and respect for the eccentric “Hebrews” or “Israelites” who seemed single-mindedly focused on mastering Southern trade.

The Jackson, Mississippi-based Goldring-Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life admits that “thousands” made the trek from Europe into the South, leaving “Jewish peddlers and merchants in virtually every small town in the South in the 1840s and 1850s.”[566] Mark Bauman, the editor of the journal of the Southern Jewish Historical Society, agrees, adding that “Jewish, family-owned department stores…*dominated* retail streets in *almost every small town and city.*”[567]

Timothy Thomas Fortune (1856–1928) grew up in Florida in the Civil War era and became the most prominent Black journalist in America. He recalled that in his time

> the Jews invaded the Southern States...and began to open stores in the cities, towns, and crossroads as fast as their wholesale Jewish merchant connections in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York could ship the goods they ordered.[568]

The *Memphis Daily Appeal* reported in 1862 an influx of more than two hundred newly arrived merchants, *the majority of whom were Jews*, displaying their “immense cargoes” for sale. “The Israelites have come down upon the city like locusts,” wrote one newspaper correspondent:

> Anything in the line of trade, up to a box of cigars, or a dozen papers of needles, may be obtained of these eager gentlemen at ruinous prices, for the

purchaser.[569]

One study of the period confirmed that in Bluff City, Tennessee, "Jewish merchants dominated the wholesale-retail clothing trade, the liquor trade, and the tobacco trade." And by 1880, "Jewish merchants were dominating" the clothing and tobacco trades in Little Rock, Arkansas.[570]

This trend toward Jewish peddler dominance in the South had been well underway by the Civil War.[571] In the midst of the warfare, an alarmed Tennessee congressman, Henry S. Foote, accused the Jews of having "flooded the country and controlled at least nine-tenths of the business of the land." He said they

> swarmed here as the locusts of Egypt. They ate up the substance of the country, they exhausted its supplies, they monopolized its trade....The end of the war [will] probably find nearly all the property of the Confederacy in the hands of Jewish Shylocks.[572]

And the known income estimates bear out a meteoric rise in Jewish earnings. In one study, historian Stephen Mostov provides a picture of the income growth of Cincinnati's Jews, who had substantial dealings in the South while based in that Ohio River city. Jews more than doubled the value of their holdings between 1850 and 1860. Further south, the picture for Jewish wealth was even brighter. Some Jews, according to Avraham Barkai, "may have amassed considerable fortunes."[573]

Traveling down the main street in Wilmington, North Carolina, said one observer, was like "journeying from Jerusalem to Jericho." During the

decade or so before the Civil War, Jews owned 26 different stores in town, including 11 of the 18 clothing stores and 6 of Wilmington's 19 dry goods stores. After the Civil War, "Jews came to dominate the city's commercial economy." Jews, said another, "swarmed there from far and near, like flies around the bung of a sugar cask." By 1894, all of the town's wholesale firms were owned by Jews.[574]

In Austin, Texas, a "large number" of clothing, liquor, and tobacco stores were operated by Jews, who "believed that no doors were barred to them." Twenty-one of the 26 merchants in 1866 Galveston were Jewish.[575]

In New Orleans, Robert Somers noticed that it was

> mostly Jews, who, by establishing stores in the little towns near the plantations, are becoming middlemen through whose hands the cotton passes from the growers into the market of New Orleans...

They conducted business, he wrote, with "a degree of rigour that was unknown in former times, and that will probably grind and impoverish the mass of poorer cultivators, white and black, for a long period to come."[576]

The busy marketplace on Decatur Street in Atlanta is where "many Jewish merchants" opened stores. A Georgia plantation resident noticed, "A good many Israelites have found their way to this remote district," each of them with "their tumble-down shanties and Cheap Jack goods."[577] By 1871, there were 22 Jewish-owned stores in the cotton-market town of Albany, Georgia, the seat of Dougherty County, where W.E.B. Du Bois would comment on the Jews' economic dominance more

than two decades later. Some members of the Augusta, Georgia, Jewish community "managed to amass large fortunes."[578] By 1890, the *Atlanta Constitution* was writing admiringly of the "Hebrews of Atlanta":

> Look around you in any and every business, in every walk of life, and you will see that the leaders are the Hebrews. Everybody must admire the wonderful business capacity with which the race seems imbued.…[A Jewish man surveying his people's accomplishments reported:] "[A]nd they own, I suppose, between two million, five hundred thousand, and three million dollars' worth of property. That is a conservative estimate..."[579]

Historian Malcolm H. Stern acknowledged that the few Jewish congregations in the South "were beginning to be *swamped* by the growing population of German immigrants which would *overrun* the South in the Reconstruction period."[580] In Selma, wrote Robert Somers in 1870,

> Two-thirds of the men of business are Germans, many of them of Hebrew extraction. The Jews have settled largely in Southern Alabama, and what with negroes and coloured people, and German and Jewish names, there is a foreign air about Selma.[581]

Many German Jews found Mobile, Alabama, to be quite hospitable and settled there, becoming successful as peddlers and merchants.[582] Monroe Street in Montgomery, Alabama, was "the center of

black activity" *and* home to a steady stream of Eastern European Jewish immigrants who set up shops where "many of their customers were black."[583]

In Beaufort County, South Carolina, "many" country stores were operated by Jewish shopkeepers, "who typically lived and raised their families 'over the store.'"[584] By the early 1880s, there were thirty Jewish businesses in the cotton-rich town of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and the "flourishing" business life of Helena was said to be conducted "principally by the Israelites."[585] Downtown Jackson, Mississippi, was said to have "a myriad of stores" owned by Jews.[586]

Likewise, in the cotton kingdom of Shreveport, Louisiana, "[a]pproxi-mately two-thirds of all merchants in the city in the years during and immediately following the Civil War were Jewish."[587] In fact, according to the *1866 City Directory,* the 90 Jewish families in Vicksburg, Mississippi, owned 35 of the city's stores. A decade later, there was not a single retail dry goods operation carried on by a Gentile.[588] By 1900, five of Clarksburg, West Virginia's seven clothing merchants were Jewish, and they had connections with Jewish wholesalers in cities such as Baltimore and New York that facilitated their success. In 1902 eight of Durham's eleven dry goods stores were Jewish owned.[589]

A Barstow County, Georgia, resident claimed that "the country swarms" with Jews and "other speculators."[590] In 1865 Albert D. Richardson, a professional observer as a Union army spy and journalist, described the influx with fascination:

> [S]tores were soon opened, and traders came crowding in from the North. Most

> of them were Jews. Everywhere we saw the deep eyes and pronounced features of that strange, enterprising people. I observed one of them…marching to the military prison. The pickets had caught him with ten thousand dollars' worth of boots and shoes, which he was taking to Dixie. He bore the miscarriage…smiling complacently, and finding consolation in the vilest of cigars. But in his dark, sad eye was a gleam of latent vengeance, which he doubtless wreaked upon the first unfortunate customer who fell into his clutches after his release. Glancing at the guests who crowded the dining-hall of the Gayoso [Hotel], one might have believed that the lost tribes of Israel were gathering there for the Millennium.[591]

These observers were not simply noting a Jewish representation in the South, but were actually describing the movement of a people—specifically skilled in commercial enterprise—from their European homelands to a racially hostile territory half a world away. Indeed, scholar Hasia Diner has stated outright that Jewish peddling was "a global movement."[592] The use of descriptive terms with ominous connotations, such as "flood," "swarm," "crowd," "invasion," and the use of Biblical imagery with calamitous overtones, such as locusts and flies, might incline one to dismiss such descriptions as "anti-Semitic."[593] But a host of Jewish scholars reported the same phenomenon in much the same way. Historian Arnold Shankman in two separate articles said:

> After the Civil War, Jews virtually monopolized peddling and controlled the

> dry-goods stores of the South to a remarkable extent.
>
> In virtually every important Southern town, one or more Jewish peddlers leased a store and began to sell…to the local population.[594]

Historian David A. Gerber, who studies American anti-Semitism, admits that Jews enjoyed a "very pronounced *overrepresentation*…in petty enterprise…[and] in the garment trade."[595] "Before long," wrote Harvard historian Oscar Handlin, "the land was dotted with general stores and groceries, dry-goods stores and some not so dry, shoe, clothing, hardware, and every other kind of establishment."[596] According to Elliott Ashkenazi, whose study of Southern Jewish businesses remains the most in-depth to date, the local general stores owned by Jews in the Mississippi Delta region "were more numerous than has generally been thought."[597] That Jews have never composed even one percent of the Southern population makes these statements all the more remarkable.

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565 "Board Member Profiles," *Circa* 11, no. 3 (fall 2002): 10. The estimated population of Jews in the South in 1900 was 35,000, and they were "some of the most wealthy and influential people in the region." See "The Hart of Dixie," *The Reporter* (winter 1998): 22. "In 1937, Jews lived in 107 different Mississippi towns. In many of these places, Jewish merchants dominated main street." See Stuart Rockoff, "Mississippi," ISJL; also, David Goldfield, "Sense of Place: Blacks, Jews, and White Gentiles in the American South," *Southern Cultures* 3, no. 1 (1997): 60.

566 "Program Mission: Why We Do What We Do," Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, 2001, http://www.msje.org/programs_mission.html.

567 Emphasis ours. Mark K. Bauman, "A Multithematic Approach to Southern Jewish History," in *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America*, ed. Marc Lee Raphael (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2008), 271, 277.

568 Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends*, 111, 113; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 106; Price, "Black Response to Anti-

Semitism," 29-30; Thomas D. Clark, "The Post–Civil War Economy in the South," *AJHQ* 55 (1965-66): 428.

569 Joseph H. Parks, "A Confederate Trade Center Under Federal Occupation: Memphis, 1862 to 1865," *JSoHis* 7, no. 3 (Aug. 1941): 293. Kathleen C. Berkeley identifies the source as the *Memphis Bulletin.* See Berkeley, *"Like a Plague of Locusts": From an Antebellum Town to a New South City: Memphis, Tennessee, 1850-1880* (New York: Garland, 1991), 94.

570 Berkeley, *"Like a Plague of Locusts,"* 140; LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 137. Jim Crow laws gave whites a monopoly on plying liquor to Blacks. See Carl V. Harris, "Reforms in Government Control of Negroes in Birmingham, Alabama, 1890-1920," *JSoHis* 38, no. 4 (Nov. 1972): 578.

571 Godine, "Peddling Tales"; Olegario, "'That Mysterious People'," 165. In describing the sheer number of Jewish peddlers in the South, Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman use the term "influx" in their *American Jewish Landmarks,* 162-63.

572 Foote represented Tennessee in the United States Senate during the late 1840s and served as its governor in the early 1850s and as a congressman in the state's Confederate government during the Civil War. James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 377. Shylock is a Jewish character in Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice* who famously demanded a "pound of flesh" from a debtor. Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 23, uses the term "swarm" in describing the antebellum upsurge of "Yankee" peddlers in the South, as does Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Cotton Kingdom* (1861; reprint, New York: Modern Library, 1953), 196. Assoc. Professor of History Thomas N. Ingersoll used the term in reference to Jewish merchants in the colonial era who behaved in ways very similar to post–Civil War Jewish trends: "Several Jews with important English and Dutch connections…were the vanguard of a *swarm* of British merchants who descended upon the Gulf Coast soon after the war.…This led to some further trade in slaves with New Orleans planters." (Emphasis ours) See Ingersoll's "The Slave Trade and the Ethnic Diversity of Louisiana's Slave Community," *Louisiana History* 37, no. 2 (spring 1996): 140-41; Jennifer Ann Stollman, "'Building Up a House of Israel in a Land of Christ': Jewish Women in the Antebellum and Civil War South" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State Univ., 2001), 344-45 n. 21. See also Charles H. Otken, *The Ills of the South, Or, Related Causes Hostile to the General Prosperity of the Southern People* (1894; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1973), 152, who quotes one Southerner:

> But Shylock has already turned his greedy eyes upon this beautiful Southland, and is now establishing his loan agencies. We can not too strongly urge upon the Southern farmer to beware of the net that is being spread for him. Shun it as you would a deadly plague, if you would save your homes from his relentless grasp.

Ibid., 9, uses the term again. See also Jonathan M. Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South: Alabama, 1860-1885* (Baton Rouge:

Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1978), 83 (for "Shylock"), 87 (for "swarm").

573 Barkai, *Branching Out,* 83, 115. Of their involvement in smuggling Barkai writes, "There is no reason to believe that Jewish businessmen, many of whom were dealing in and manufacturing some of the most needed goods, were more squeamish than their Gentile competitors and missed their chance." Arthur Hertzberg, *The Jews in America: Four Centuries of an Uneasy Encounter, A History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), 132, 134. Also, see Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-Town America*, 105ff and passim. Weissbach claims that Jewish monopoly of the local market for goods and services is a "mistaken notion" but then presents only proof in *support* of Jewish monopolization. See also Diner, "Entering the Mainstream," 104; Hertzberg, *The Jews in America*, 131-34.

574 ISJL, "Wilmington, North Carolina"; Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010), 144; Leah Elizabeth Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South, 1858-1905" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999), 37. Hagedorn quotes another writer's testimony: that "Jewish merchants had largely acquired possession of the stores is too overwhelming to deny." Dr. Stuart Rockoff concurs in "Jewish Role Vital in Development of North Carolina," *Circa* (winter 2010), 12: "Jews settled in virtually every corner of the state, with most opening retail stores."

575 Jay Lawrence Silberberger, "The First One Hundred Years: A History of the Austin Jewish Community, 1850-1950" (senior honors thesis, Univ. of Texas at Austin, 1974), 2; Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks,* 2:262.

576 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 198. This dominance may have been longstanding. One official in New Orleans reported in the late 18th century that "Jews held control of local markets and prices." Abraham Nasatir and James R. Mills, "Commerce and Contraband in New Orleans During the French and Indian War: A Documentary Study of the Texel and Three Brothers Affairs," in *Monographs of the American Jewish Archives*, no. 7, eds. Jacob Rader Marcus and Stanley F. Chyet (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1968), 18. Also, Charles Shanabruch, "The Louisiana Immigration Movement, 1891-1907: An Analysis of Efforts, Attitudes, and Opportunities," *Louisiana History* 18, no. 2 (spring 1977): 214-15, 216-17.

577 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 20; Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers," 56, 77 n. 19; Eric L. Goldstein, "'Now Is the Time to Show Your True Colors': Southern Jews, Whiteness, and the Rise of Jim Crow," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 147, 148; Frances Butler Leigh, *Ten Years on a Georgia Plantation Since the War* (1883; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 302-3. These shops, writes Leigh, sell articles that "are about four times the price and one-fourth as good as the same kind of article in England…" Also, Steven Hertzberg, "Southern Jews and Their Encounter with Blacks: Atlanta, 1850-1915," *Atlanta Historical Journal* 23 (1979): 12-13; and Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks,* 2:100: In 1875, the

Atlanta Daily Herald said, "we congratulate ourselves because nothing is so indicative of a city's prosperity as to see an influx of Jews…"

578 ISJL, "Albany, Georgia"; ISJL, "Augusta, Georgia."

579 "Hebrews of Atlanta," *AC*, 12 Jan. 1890, 16.

580 Emphasis ours. Malcolm H. Stern, "The Role of the Rabbi in the South," in *"Turn to the South": Essays on Southern Jewry,* eds. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1979), 24.

581 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 167.

582 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 33. And for Jewish peddlers and merchants in Gadsden, Ala., see *Circa* 17, no. 3 (fall 2008): 12.

583 Mary Stanton, "At One with the Majority," *SJH* 9 (2006): 154.

584 Stanley Farbstein, "Country Roads and Country Stores," *Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 10, no. 2 (summer 2005): 4. On page 5: "There were many other Jewish-owned country stores in South Carolina…" Also, Rhetta Aronson Mendelsohn, "Jewish Families of Orangeburg: Links in a Chain," *Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 10, no. 1 (winter 2005): 4. By the mid-20th century, at least 15 stores on the main street in Orangeburg were Jewish owned.

585 ISJL, "Pine Bluff, Arkansas"; LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 169. LeMaster quotes *American Israelite*, 19 March 1880.

586 ISJL, "Jackson, Mississippi."

587 Eric J. Brock, *The Jewish Community of Shreveport* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2002), 18. See also Susie King Taylor, *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp with the 33d United States Colored Troops, Late 1st S.C. Volunteers* (Boston, 1902), 72: "Almost all the stores are kept either by the Jews or Germans."

588 Gertrude Philippsborn, *The History of the Jewish Community of Vicksburg, from 1820 to 1968* (Vicksburg, Miss., 1969), 12. Also, Schmier, *Reflections of Southern Jewry*, 61.

589 Deborah R. Weiner, "The Jews of Clarksburg: Community Adaptation and Survival, 1900-60," *West Virginia History Journal* 54 (1995): 59-77; Rogoff, *Homelands*, 77.

590 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 68.

591 Albert D. Richardson, *The Secret Service* (Hartford, 1865), 264; Nation of Islam, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, 163 n. 635.

592 See Diner, "Entering the Mainstream," 86-87, 96, 99, 105-6.

593 See also George Ruble Woolfolk, *The Cotton Regency: The Northern Merchants and Reconstruction, 1865-1880* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958), 109: "Loan sharks flocked to the southern towns to begin the bloodsucking, and clung like leeches to the farmers." Woolfolk specifically refers to "Jewish storekeepers" on pages 110-11. Mark K. Bauman writes that "Jews from other parts of the country…*flocked* to southern cities after the war." (Emphasis ours) See his article "A Multithematic Approach to Southern Jewish History," 271. Charles H. Otken, in *The Ills of the South,* also uses Biblical language (p. 50): "Poor nigger! Poor, ignorant white man! How you have suffered at the hands of the Philistines! Meanness, trickery, and fraud have had full sweep at many an unfortunate victim." See also Rupert B. Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture: A*

Study in the Social Geography of the American South (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1929), 177-79.

594 Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends*, 111; Shankman, "Friend or Foe?" 106; Eli N. Evans, *The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 330.

595 Emphasis ours. David A. Gerber, "Cutting Out Shylock: Elite Anti-Semitism and the Quest for Moral Order in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century American Market Place," *JAH* 69, no. 3 (Dec. 1982): 627n.

596 Oscar Handlin, *Adventure in Freedom: Three Hundred Years of Jewish Life in America* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954), 53; Barkai, *Branching Out*, 64. See Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 41: "By the early twentieth century there were one or two Jewish stores in almost every small Southern town and a profusion of them in larger cities." By 1920, historian C. Vann Woodward remarked, "Every little town had its 'Jew store.'" Woodward, *Tom Watson: Agrarian Rebel* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963), 442.

597 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 32. Steven Hertzberg wrote that Jewish storekeepers were "scattered in hundreds" of communities throughout the South. See his *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 16. See also William N. Parker, "The South in the National Economy, 1865-1970," *Southern Economic Journal* 46, no. 4 (April 1980): 1035-36 n. 28. Economists Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch found about 8,000 "general stores" throughout the Cotton South in 1880, many enjoying a "territorial monopoly." See their *One Kind of Freedom: The Economic Consequences of Emancipation* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), 132-35. On 387 n. 34, they state that the "Mississippi River basin" was "an area that particularly attracted Jewish immigrants after the war." It should be noted that Ransom and Sutch take great pains to dispute the claims of a prevalence of Jewish merchants (ibid., 343 n. 39, for example). But others disagree. Robert Higgs, "Participation of Blacks and Immigrants in the American Merchant Class, 1890-1910: Some Demographic Relations," *Explorations in Economic History* 13, no. 2 (1976): 155-62. Jewish scholars Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman say that "a substantial number of merchants in Mississippi's cotton-growing regions were Jews..." See their *American Jewish Landmarks,* 2:162-63. Also, Michael Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society: The Natchez District, 1860-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1983), 175. Wayne (Table 21) shows that in 1878, in just one district—Concordia Parish, Louisiana—the four local merchants with Jewish names supplied a total of 249 customers, while the two merchants with Gentile names supplied 27. See also Scott Marler, "Merchants in the Transition to a New South: Central Louisiana, 1840-1880," *Louisiana History* 42, no. 2 (spring 2001): 184-88; Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg, eds., *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 9. Diner, "Entering the Mainstream," 93, 95, states: "Generally…the more agrarian the region, the more attractive immigrant Jewish peddlers found it." She adds that the South was "a particularly attractive magnet for young Jews looking to gain a foothold in American commerce." On Jewish businesses "dominating

the dry goods, clothing, cotton buying, and farming supplies markets," see Wendy Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses: Memoir of a Southern Jewish Woman* (Jackson, MS: Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 2000), 5-6; and Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, 81 (on abuses by merchants), 120-22 (on Jewish ownership). Also, John C. Willis, *Forgotten Time: The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta After the Civil War* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 2000), 86.

Jews Become Big Business

The overrepresentation of Jewish peddlers and merchants operating during slavery and in the Jim Crow South was not limited to petty retailing. The acknowledged authority on Southern Jewish history Rabbi Bertram W. Korn claimed that "the typical Jew" in the South was simply "trying to eke out a marginal living in an occupation which ranked quite low on the social scale."[598] And while Dr. Korn's assessment certainly describes the *temporary* experience of some immigrant Jewish peddlers, he has misled his readers about the extensive role of Jewish merchants, traders, and bankers in the Southern economy—the very nucleus of Black oppression.

Whereas many Jewish immigrants in the region set up small mom-and-pop variety stores in the rural outback, these stores were in fact retail outlets fed by an extensive cadre of Jewish businessmen running high-volume operations as wholesalers, as suppliers of plantations, as marketers of plantation produce, and as bankers for these major corporate enterprises. As a new moneyed class of merchants and financiers, Jews quickly became the elite of their Southern communities, replacing the old planter aristocracy. In a remarkable statement that runs counter to general perceptions of the Black–Jewish relationship, scholar Elliott Ashkenazi wrote:

> As a group the Jewish storekeepers existed to sell all kinds of supplies to the area's cotton plantations, and the trade supported several such merchants on both a large and small scale.[599]

Indeed, Jewish merchants seemed to focus most strongly on the all-important, highly profitable, Black-labor-intensive cotton trade.

The heart of the Cotton South is the area along the Mississippi River running about 200 miles north from its mouth at New Orleans. After 1840, according to Ashkenazi, that area, once known as the Nile of America, became home to "a surprising number of Jewish merchants, small and large, who lived mostly in Bayou Sara, Clinton, and Jackson."[600] In the rural areas, he says, Jewish merchants represented "a disproportionate number." In New Orleans alone, some 64 dry goods establishments—that is, business firms selling textiles, clothing and related merchandise—were owned by Jews, and 59 of them sold at both retail and wholesale. In rural Louisiana, Jewish merchants are documented in at least 31 of the 47 parishes that existed in 1860—not including the peddlers, who very likely served all 47.[601]

University of Sussex professor Clive Webb confirms directly that in possibly the most racist place on earth, "Jews exerted an increasingly powerful influence over commercial trade in the South," becoming "both individually and collectively, a dominant force in the retail industry." Some, he says, were able to carve out "their own retail *empires*."[602]

By 1880, Savannah, Georgia, Jewish retailers controlled 80 percent of the clothing trade, 55 percent of all dry goods businesses, and 40 percent of the cigar and tobacco shops in their region. "More striking," wrote Dr. Mark I. Greenberg, "was Jews' *domination of wholesaling* in these areas. They controlled almost 100 percent of the wholesale distribution of boots and shoes, cigars and tobacco, clothing, dry goods, and groceries."[603] Leonard

Rogoff stated "Jews dominated" the clothier trade in Durham, North Carolina, and in 1902 "eight of the town's eleven dry-goods stores were Jewish owned." By 1900, thirteen Jewish grocers inhabited the area around Main Street, most catering to a Black clientele.[604]

Such realities, wrote Greenberg, "raised Jews' visibility in the local economy," when, in fact, the Jews *were* the local economy. Any retailer wishing to buy basic necessities in the Savannah market was almost entirely limited to buying from a Jewish establishment. In addition,

> Jewish businessmen became indispensable to the city's commercial trade with both local and distant shopkeepers and with consumers in the areas they dominated.[605]

By 1877, 28 Jewish businesses lined the streets of the cotton stronghold of Natchez, Mississippi, "comprising over half the dry goods and cotton buying operations," even though Jews were less than 5 percent of the population. A generation later Jewish businesses were said to "dominate" the dry goods, clothing, cotton buying, and farming supplies markets.[606]

In 1870, Jewish merchants in Calvert, Texas, could boast of owning fifteen of the one hundred businesses that lined the main street.[607] Eight years later, Jews owned 20 percent of the city's commercial enterprises. Dr. Marilyn Goldman, who studied the history of the Jewish presence in Texas, suspected that "In some cities perhaps Jewish merchants greatly outnumbered non-Jewish merchants."

In some towns such as Luling or Gonzales,

Texas, Goldman wrote, "Jewish merchants represented a significant portion of the town business-m[e]n…" And by the 1880s, Jewish businessmen dominated the dry goods trade in Victoria, Texas, making "significant contributions" to the growth of that staunchly Jim Crow city.[608] In the New Mexico Territory in the mid- to late 1800s just 2 Jewish firms, Spiegelberg Bros. and the Staabs, "controlled the drygoods trade."[609]

In his excellent review of the economic life of the American Jew in this era, Rabbi Allan Tarshish admitted that even though the Jews' numbers were tiny in comparison to those of Gentiles, "In the smaller centers, their ratio as businessmen was sometimes as high as 85 per cent or 90 per cent."[610]

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598 Bertram W. Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865," *PAJHS* 50, no. 3 (March 1961): 155.

599 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 249. Also, Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 40.

600 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 107. On page 109: "The number of stores run by Jews in Clinton and environs was considerable." Yeshiva University professor Lucy S. Dawidowicz writes that Jews had "a major role in commerce and trade[,] especially in the cotton trade…" See her *On Equal Terms: Jews in America, 1881-1981* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1982), 37.

601 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 169, 177, 21.

602 Emphasis ours. Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 102, 130. Indicative of Jewish dominance in trade is a list of consignees to a steamship transporting goods from New York to New Orleans published in the *Times-Picayune*, 3 Sept. 1866, 1.

603 Emphasis ours. Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 114-15. In 1841, six Jews helped found the Savannah Chamber of Commerce. By 1880, a number of Savannah Jewish firms had moved into the manufacture of clothing, whiskey, cigars, candy, and lumber. See ibid., 123-25.

604 Rogoff, *Homelands*, 77; ISJL, "Durham, North Carolina."

605 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 115.

606 Kenneth Hoffman, "The Jews of Natchez," unpublished paper, 1993, Historic Natchez Foundation, 10-11.

607 It should be kept in mind that the number of Jewish businesses compared to that of Gentiles tells us little about the share of revenues these businesses controlled. A mom-and-pop corner store next to a Wal-Mart represents 50 percent of the businesses on that block, but

only a tiny fraction of that block's revenues.

608 Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 121, 137-38, 143, 204.

609 Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks,* 2:176.

610 Allan Tarshish, "The Economic Life of the American Jew in the Middle Nineteenth Century," in *Essays in American Jewish History* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1958), 292.

All in the Family: Connections to Northern Jewish Business

It must be remembered that Judaism is not an economic system.

—Dr. Meir Tamari, founder of the Center for Business Ethics

The familiar narrative of the solitary Jewish peddler trekking through the American countryside suggests that the Jewish presence in the Jim Crow South comprised isolated, unconnected individuals operating both transiently and independently. On the contrary, these old country Jewish immigrants were tied in to a vast network of Jewish mercantile interests that assured their success and business longevity.[611] German Jews had long been established in the financial center of New York; by the time of the post–Civil War immigration influx, they had amassed such wealth that they could offer considerable financial backing to the governments of both the Union and the Confederacy.[612]

For their financial sustenance, Ashkenazi wrote, "New Orleans wholesalers looked to New York"[613] and also to Philadelphia and Baltimore, which were

inhabited by “hundreds of Jewish wholesalers” willing to supply merchandise to Southern businessmen.[614] Under this economic model the small towns in the region developed, not around the social needs of the local citizens, but as part of a much larger enterprise of commercial expansion of the plantation system, a commercial enterprise driven in large part by the capital strength of the North.[615]

When the Civil War ended in 1865, all that remained was a wide-open Southern goldmine of opportunity. The northern-based German Jews enlisted their immigrant brethren to “root out” the South and market their wide-ranging product lines.[616] Robert Somers confirmed this when he found that Jewish retailers were “sent down by firms in New York and other large towns to sell goods…”[617] Dr. Harold Brackman adds matter-of-factly, “the immigrant Jewish peddler in post-bellum Southern society was an agent of the conquering North.”[618]

An array of Jewish social agencies were set up for the sole purpose of greeting arriving immigrants and tying them in with this impressive Jewish mercantile network. These agencies greeted the new arrivals at the New York City docks with paid transportation to the South. Manufacturers’ representatives supplied them with a stock of merchandise, trained them in the fine points of peddling, and sent them into the countryside.[619] If arrangements were necessary to care for his family until the new peddler was able to do so himself, this was made part of the agreement.[620]

Oxford University professor Rowena Olegario wrote of these Jewish merchants, whom she called “That Mysterious People”:

> Of all the immigrant groups of this period, only the Jews succeeded in forming effective business networks, which eventually stretched from the country's small inland towns to its large commercial centers. Even small-scale establishments were potential suppliers to the thousands of Jewish peddlers who plied their trade throughout the country.[621]

Once he arrived in the South, the resources of this network were extended to the young peddler,[622] who in turn extended the network's retail reach deep into the countryside.[623] Once stabilized he would typically send for family members in Europe, who upon arrival immediately entered an established business that was ready to receive them.[624] It did not matter if the immigrant was penniless, could not speak English, or had no particular skill or trade. His Jewishness alone secured his entry and his future in this profitable and exclusively Jewish enterprise.[625]

Through this method Southern Jewish businesses quickly "developed their own supply system and credit mechanisms," forming an internal subsystem for mutual support and maximization of profits.[626] In Mississippi, for example, Woodville Jews faithfully serving the surrounding cotton plantations had a close relationship with their counterparts in Bayou Sara, Clinton, and Jackson—years before the end of slavery.[627] New Orleans was the fulcrum of the cotton trade in the South, and it was widely believed that Jewish wholesalers in the city "had a monopoly with the small Jewish retailers" in the cotton-growing districts like Woodville. According to Ashkenazi, "To have proceeded as they did, Jews needed trustworthy

associates, namely, other Jews." At the time of the bankruptcy of his business Samuel Kaiser had over 200 mostly Jewish business customers.[628] Leonard Rogoff affirms that Jews "maintained *a separate ethnic economy* where they financed and employed each other."[629]

Jacob Lemann bought from Jewish merchants and suppliers in New Orleans, some of whom were wholesalers supplying "literally hundreds of small Jewish country retailers."[630] When describing the Woodville wholesale dry goods firm of Henry Joel & Co. in 1852, the reporters for the credit agency of R. G. Dun & Co. stated:

> With Joel being a Jew they have the advantage over other young businessmen as the "Country Jews" patronize their own and the chief customers of these small wholesale stores are the country Jews.[631]

Wholesalers in New Orleans "deliberately supported, and sometimes bought out, Jewish country merchants to keep them in business."[632] Even the lines of merchandise offered for sale by Jewish businessmen "differed appreciably from their non-Jewish colleagues," and the townspeople understood that "goods and services not hitherto available were being offered by Jews."[633]

And these Jews may have been in the same business but by no means were they competitors. A common practice was to transfer merchandise among storekeepers to fill customers' orders. If a planter ordered several items from one store, the other stores in town cooperated to provide any missing items to fill that order. Mutual aid worked to everyone's benefit.[634]

Historian of American banking Larry Schweikart points out that kinship patterns among Jews "probably explain much about the ease with which they obtained credit. Many Jewish families had relatives or friends in banking." He maintains that

> No ethnic group profited as much from kinship ties as did southern Jews (or northern Jews who traveled south for work)….Jewish bankers and commission merchants were extremely influential in New Orleans banking.[635]

As bankers, Jews provided the financial infrastructure for the growth of their insular network of Jewish family businesses in the North and the South, and constituted a necessary avenue of trade through which inter-regional and even foreign investment could be efficiently disbursed. Henry L. Feingold pointed out that "Jewish investment capital had nowhere to go except to their own banking houses…"[636] Rabbi Allan Tarshish adds that

> During the Civil War, many Jewish bankers were able, through their European connections, to tap for the United States Government sources of funds not available to others. Individual Jewish bankers helped to develop the railroad industry in various parts of the country.[637]

The Lehmans, the Seligmans, the Wertheims, the Guggenheims, the Goldmans and the Sachses—a veritable *Who's Who* of international banking legends thought to be competitors—were all members of New York's Temple Emanu-El.[638] This

impetus to engage in a remarkably collegial Jewish protectionism in the face of the cutthroat world of trade and finance was firmly rooted in the ancient practices of European Judaism.[639] Two concepts in traditional Jewish law have served to manage business competition for the benefit of the Jewish community as a whole. They are *hasagat g'vul* and *herem hayishuv* (or *ha-Yishub*). Under these Talmudic directives Jewish newcomers were prohibited from settling and trading in a Jewish community without the unanimous consent of the residents. One of the goals of these prohibitions and their harsh penalties was to prevent any potential economic imbalance that might result from free and open access to the local commercial markets. The Jewish community itself regulated competition that might hurt or endanger any established businesses, thus protecting those businesses' monopolies of trades and services in their regions.[640] Further, writes Dr. Irving Agus, such Jewish laws were intended to control Gentile aggression:

> The *herem hayyishuv* was designed to force the overlord to deal justly with the Jews of his territory; otherwise that territory would become a commercial wilderness. Thus the Jews used monopolistic practices as a means of forcing the non-Jews to behave in a civilized manner toward them…[641]

These were in effect Judaic "non-compete" laws, and they were seen as essential to the protection and survival of Jewish communities in Europe.[642] Toward this end, Jews in Europe were known to have appealed successfully to the Gentile governments to use their policing powers to prevent other merchants from competing against them.[643]

And though Jews had unrestricted access to trade and commerce in the United States, immigrant Jews came from regions in Europe where these practices had been in force for centuries, so economic protectionism was naturally incorporated into their overall communal structure in their new land.[644] Early nineteenth-century Jews played an "active role in demonstrating *and protecting* their business integrity and in seeking leadership positions."[645] And through this intramural protectionism Georgia Jews were able to loan out over a million dollars to Jewish businesses to help them make it through the Great Depression of the 1930s.[646]

This orderly and systematic economic compact adhered to repeatedly throughout the South is the very core and foundation of the Jewish American wealth-building process. It was an exclusive and entirely private Jewish network of unprecedented proportions honed over the ages and repeated in every frontier of the Jewish diaspora.[647] Jews did not exist on the fringes of a Gentile economy; nor did they constitute a poor underclass trying to join the economic mainstream. In business—especially in the cotton South—Jews were the mainstream.

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611 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 7, 91, 124, 93; Rogoff, *Down Home*, 22ff, 52-59; April Elaine Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl': Jewish and Catholic Responses to New South Industrialization, 1880-1914" (Ph.D. diss., Temple Univ., 2002), 90; Kaplan, "The Determination of Jewish Identity below the Mason-Dixon Line," 108; Woodman, *King Cotton*, 171.

612 See Barkai, *Branching Out*, 81; "Finance: The North American Continent," *UJE* (1942), 4:301. Also, Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 42, 38: "By 1900, New York City listed sixty Jewish millionaires, many of them still sporting heavy German accents." The root of German-Jewish financial strength was clear. "Of 52 banking institutions in Berlin at the beginning of the 19th century, 30 were Jewish." See *UJE* (1948), s.v. "capitalism, role of Jews in"; Scott B. MacDonald and Albert L. Gastmann, *A History of Credit and Power in the Western World* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001), 171-76. This does not exclude the important contributions of French Jewish

bankers like Emile Erlanger, who financed the war effort of the pro-slavery Confederate government. See Judith Fenner Gentry, "A Confederate Success in Europe: The Erlanger Loan," *JSoHis* 36, no. 2 (May 1970): 157-88.

613 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 192. On the Northern investments in cotton and slavery see Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), 86ff, 310-12. Also, Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery* (New York: Random House, Ballantine Books, 2005).

614 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 111; Shelly Tenenbaum, *A Credit to Their Community: Jewish Loan Societies in the United States, 1880-1945* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1993), 17. Harold D. Woodman wrote that "By 1880 credit from the North had become so widespread that conservative voices were counseling restraint." See Harold D. Woodman, "The Decline of Cotton Factorage after the Civil War," *American Historical Review* 71, no. 4 (July 1966): 1234.

615 Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom: A Cultural Study in the Deep South* (1939; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), 75; Flade, *The Lehmans*, 43; Lawrence N. Powell, *New Masters: Northern Planters During the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1980; reprint, New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 1998). Also, Farrow, Lang, and Frank, *Complicity*, 13; Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 1 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 215-16. Also, Kenneth J. Lipartito, "The New York Cotton Exchange and the Development of the Cotton Futures Market," *Business History Review* 57, no. 1 (spring 1983): 53ff.

616 Godine, "Peddling Tales"; Herbert Weaver, "Foreigners in Ante-Bellum Towns of the Lower South," *JSoHis* 13, no. 1 (Feb. 1947): 69. Also Morawska, *Insecure Prosperity*, 31. See also Supple, "A Business Elite," 145: "Familiar names in this respect…are Seligman, Guggenheim, Heidelbach, Straus, Goldman, Kuhn, Loeb, Lehman, Wertheim, etc."

617 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 151; Woodman, *King Cotton*, 170.

618 Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 331-32. For more on the economic interdependence of North and South, see McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire*, 26-27.

619 Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 262-63; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 27; Sorin, *A Time for Building*, 153; Clark, "The Post–Civil War Economy in the South," 425.

620 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 2, 18, 40. See also Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 289-90 n. 8.

621 Olegario, "'That Mysterious People'," 167, 168 (for the source of the term), passim; Dawidowicz, *On Equal Terms*, 25-28; Tenenbaum, *A Credit to Their Community*, 38-39, 48; Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978), 42. These Jewish trading and finance networks are mentioned

in the following: Zvi Loker, "Jews in the Grand'Anse Colony of Saint-Domingue," *AJA* 34, no. 1 (April 1982): 92-93; Peter R. Decker, "Jewish Merchants in San Francisco: Social Mobility on the Urban Frontier," *AJH* 68, no. 4 (June 1979): 399ff. Barry L. Stiefel writes that the mercantile connections of notorious Jewish slave-shipper Aaron Lopez were part of an extensive "Sephardic network of the Atlantic world." See "The Lopez Family of Newport and Charleston and Its Heirloom," *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 15, no. 3 (Nov. 2009): 395; James Roberts, "The Jamaican Misadventures of Aaron Lopez's Son-In-Law and Factor, Abraham Pereira Mendes," *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 15, no. 2 (2008): 231-33.

622 See autobiographical account by Jewish immigrant Abraham Bisno, *Union Pioneer,* 45-47. Also, see Sorin, *A Time for Building*, 155.

623 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 38 and passim. An example of the process is in the narrative of Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 39-55. Also, Marcie Cohen Ferris, "Dining in the Dixie Diaspora: A Meeting of Region and Religion," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 239.

624 Example in Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 62.

625 Ibid., 22; Stephen G. Mostov, "Dun and Bradstreet Reports as a Source of Jewish Economic History: Cincinnati, 1840-1875," *AJH* 72, no. 3 (March 1983): 342, 348ff.

626 Barkai, *Branching Out*, 61. See also Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 259, 291 n. 20; Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 120; Lucy S. Dawidowicz, "The Business of American Jews," *Forward*, 2 Oct. 1992, 10; Supple, "A Business Elite," passim; Sorin, *A Time for Building*, 158.

627 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 233. These communities were linked by a railroad, which made commerce much more efficient.

628 Ibid., 235, 262, 266, 186, 229: "Similarities in background allowed Jewish immigrants in all parts of the state to deal with one another easily in business." See Morawska, *Insecure Prosperity*, 31-32; and Marler, "Merchants in the Transition to a New South," 176, 182-86.

629 Emphasis ours. Rogoff, *Homelands*, 63, 27: "Jews replicated their European pattern of maintaining a separate ethnic economy within a larger national economy….Supported by family credit, Jews were economically resilient and independent." Also Rogoff, *Down Home*, 52ff, 129ff.

630 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 259.

631 Ibid., 235, 242: "[T]he number of Jewish merchants in [the] town [of Woodville, La.] was relatively high."

632 Ibid., 260. Page 290 n. 12: "Beer's firm bought from more than seventy separate jobbers or manufacturers in New York. Of these, about 30 percent were Jews." See also page 176: Of approximately 150 customers who owed money to the firm of A. Beer & Co. at the time of its bankruptcy in 1855, two-thirds were Jews. Ibid., 110: "A recurring theme in business transactions among Jews, however, was the conduct of business in ways calculated to help other Jews." Ibid., 155, 156. Ibid., 176: "New Orleans Jewish wholesalers, large and

small, often relied almost exclusively on the country trade for their business and generally sold to stores owned by Jews." Ibid., 147: "Trade with Jewish country storekeepers…constituted a major portion of the business of several Jewish wholesalers."

633 Ibid., 255.

634 Ibid., 45, and 46: "Their European backgrounds led to regional, not national, attachments and from there to particular communal structures defined in one way or another by Judaism instead of secular political structures."

635 Larry Schweikart, *Banking in the American South from the Age of Jackson to Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1987), 215, 213ff; Zenner, "American Jewry," 20-21. See also Marc Lee Raphael, *Jews and Judaism in the United States: A Documentary History* (New York: Behrman House, 1983), 36-37 (chart). Also, *UJE* (1948), s.v. "capitalism, role of Jews in." Also, ISJL, "New Orleans, Louisiana." The practice of marrying within the same families of Jewish bankers had financial advantages. Of the 19 Rothschild cousins (children of the "five brothers"), 14 married a Rothschild. Huibert Schijf, "Jewish Bankers, 1850-1914: Internationalization along Ethnic Lines," in *Diaspora Entrepreneurial Networks: Four Centuries of History*, eds. Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, Gelina Harlaftis, and Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 193-94, 201-3, 211.

636 Henry L. Feingold, *Zion in America: The Jewish Experience from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Twayne, 1974), 79-81.

637 Allan Tarshish, "The Economic Life of the American Jew in the Middle Nineteenth Century," in *Essays in American Jewish History* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1958), 292.

638 Supple, "A Business Elite," 162.

639 Scott B. MacDonald and Albert L. Gastmann, *A History of Credit and Power in the Western World* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001), 43ff; Fernand Braudel, *The Wheels of Commerce*, trans. Siân Reynolds, vol. 2 of *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 157ff. For Jewish trade activity in the post-Columbian era, see Jonathan Israel, "Diasporas Jewish and non-Jewish and the World Maritime Empires," in *Diaspora Entrepreneurial Networks: Four Centuries of History,* eds. Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, Gelina Harlaftis, and Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 2-26 (slave trade referred to on pp. 11-12, 13, 19, 20-21).

640 See Dennis W. Carlton and Avi Weiss, "The Economics of Religion, Jewish Survival, and Jewish Attitudes Toward Competition in Torah Education," *Journal of Legal Studies* 30, no. 1 (Jan. 2001): 267-71.

641 Irving A. Agus, *Urban Civilization in Pre-Crusade Europe* (New York: Yeshiva Univ. Press, 1965), 463. Jews, it should be noted, never applied the *herem hayishuv* to compel American or local Southern authorities to abolish Black slavery or eliminate Jim Crow apartheid.

642 Meir Tamari, *"With All Your Possessions": Jewish Ethics and Economic Life* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 113-14. These laws were

not in effect in Muslim societies, where Jewish rights were not restricted.

643 Berthold Altmann, "Jews and the Rise of Capitalism: Economic Theory and Practice in a Westphalian Community," *Jewish Social Studies* 5 (1943): 178, 182-84.

644 See L. Rabinowitz, "The Talmudic Basis of the Herem Ha-Yishub," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 28 (1938): 217-23; Israel, "Diasporas Jewish and non-Jewish," 2-26 (slave trade referred to on pp. 11-12, 13, 19, 20-21); Chaim Bermant, *The Cousinhood* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 1-4, passim.

645 Emphasis ours. Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 125, 114-15; ISJL, "Savannah, Georgia."

646 ISJL, "Fitzgerald, Georgia."

647 See for instance Jonathan I. Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550-1750,* 3d ed. (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1998), 128-34, 140-50; Nuala Zahedieh, "Making Mercantilism Work: London Merchants and Atlantic Trade in the Seventeenth Century," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 6th ser., 9 (1999): 148, 155, 156-58; Anka Muhlstein, *Baron James: The Rise of the French Rothschilds* (New York: Vendome Press, 1982), 24-25.

If I Were a Rich Man…: From Peddler to Banker

In a capitalist economic system, there is a no more important function than that of banker. It is at the very opposite end of the occupational scale, far from the position reserved for "slave laborer." And it is the action of bankers that makes slavery possible. Bankers are entrusted to collect the wealth of their communities and to invest it in public projects and private ventures that further the growth and development of those communities. Throughout the nineteenth century, America's economy was firmly based on cotton, so the bank-funded projects of a community frequently meant the expansion of plantations and the supporting infrastructure, and thus African slavery and American apartheid.[648]

In the era of slavery and Jim Crow, Jews were often the bankers of the communities where they settled and thrived. In fact, the numbers of Southern Jews who were prominent bankers throughout the region will surprise those who have maintained that Jews were not a significant presence in the region. Their role in the financing of the institutions of anti-Black oppression has never been fully assessed or considered. Scholar Carolyn LeMaster makes an indisputable point about Jewish economic power:

> The social and economic history of the South cannot be thoroughly considered without the inclusion of southern Jewish history….[O]ne can safely say that they [Jewish entrepreneurs] played an important, crucial role in reestablishing commerce after th[e civil] war.[649]

The Jewish immigrant's pathway to the pinnacle of the Southern regional economy was unimpeded. He generally began as a peddler servicing the needs of frontier settlements, earning the respectable sum of $8.40 per week (about 3 times the income of a Black field hand).[650] His burdensome backpack quickly gave way to a brick-and-mortar shop in the center of town. The excess profits he made became the investment capital that drove Southern economic development. Before long, the merchant became the collector of other investors' capital and thus a banking institution was born.

The Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life (ISJL) confirms that in the formative years of the city of Montgomery, Alabama, the "important banks and institutions were owned and operated by Jews." Similarly, they "were responsible for much of the economic development and prosperity of early Selma." And the ISJL further reveals that the Steiner Brothers once saved the Jim Crow city of Birmingham, Alabama, from bankruptcy with a financial restructuring package called the "Steiner Plan."[651] Fayetteville, North Carolina, Jews are described as having played "a pivotal role in the city's economic development."[652] Nineteenth-century Memphis was described by Jewish historian Selma S. Lewis thus:

> Jews have participated fully in Memphis's development, shared its problems, enjoyed its successes, profited from its blessings, and furthered its welfare and culture. Never more than a small fraction of the total population, the Jewish community has nevertheless been a significant presence in the city.[653]

All five Jim Crow cities are notorious for their

longstanding policies of racial exclusion and violence.

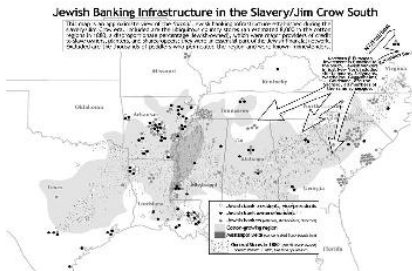
A single Jew, Ben Massell, built over 1,000 buildings in the city of Atlanta.[654] In Texas, according to Marilyn Kay Cheatham Goldman, Jewish merchants

> prospered to such an extent that they were a[b]le to invest accumulated capital in developing Texas economy and inf[r]astructure. They supported the development of railroads, wharves and...formed insurance companies and banks to promote Texas commerce.[655]

Additionally, it should be noted that the unique power of these banks to bring investment, and thus economic expansion, to communities throughout the South is the same power they had to *withhold* that investment. Never had this power been used to alter the suffering of the Black masses toiling under the yoke of slavery and Jim Crow. The reality of southern Black life—the shack housing; the unpaved roads; the lack of clean water, plumbing, and electricity; the substandard or nonexistent schools and health services (all problems easily managed through bank-financed infrastructure projects)—was never addressed by this thriving Jewish banking network.

Jews, who quickly rose to the heights of economic security in America by reaping the profits of slavery, had no interest in assisting the Black man out of his degraded condition and sought no alliance, friendship, or cooperation. Blacks would certainly have benefited from participation in this Jewish job-training and -placement network. Blacks spoke English, knew the territory and the

consumers, and had a long résumé of actual work experience in America. Even with these advanced qualifications, the Black man was barred from entry. As one Jewish Kentucky merchant pridefully put it, he would "gladly send away a negro [who] works about his yard" to "give a chance to a Jew."[656]



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648 See the discussion on banking, in George D. Green, "Banking and the Allocation of Credit," chap. 1 in *Finance and Economic Development in the Old South: Louisiana Banking, 1804-1861* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1972) and passim.

649 LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 101, 149-50.

650 Rogoff, *Homelands*, 78. This $437 annual salary compares favorably with that of a field hand ($150) or an average industrial worker in 1860 ($297). See Clarence D. Long, *Wages and Earnings in the United States, 1860-1890* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1960), 68.

651 ISJL, "Montgomery, Alabama"; "A Brief History of the Montgomery and Selma Jewish Communities," *Circa* 5, no. 1 (spring 1995): 7; ISJL, "Birmingham, Alabama."

652 ISJL, "Fayetteville, North Carolina."

653 Selma S. Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt: The Jewish Community of Memphis, Tennessee, 1840s-1960s* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1998), ix.

654 ISJL, "Atlanta, Georgia."

655 Marilyn Kay Cheatham Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric: Nineteenth-Century Jewish Merchants Living Texas Reality and Myth" (Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M Univ., 2003), 240.

656 Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-Town America*, 67.

Banking on Slavery: The Jewish Banking Network in Slavery and Jim Crow

Banking historian Larry Schweikart wrote that "A substantial number of southern Jews engaged in banking, and their records show strong kinship bonds and interregional ties of ethnicity that add still other divisions to the banking class." According to several Jewish sources, the following is an abbreviated list of Jewish bankers in the American South. Many more Jewish merchants acted as informal banks throughout the Southern countryside.

> [NOTE: This Jewish banking network was certainly not limited to the South, but existed in every area of the continent where Jews settled and opened businesses. This study focuses on the Jewish bankers of the South because of their direct impact on the fortunes of the Southern Black population.]

Name	Description
	Alabama
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] McCrory; chm. of the board and C.E.O.; son of Heyman

[illegible] Wolff's son

[illegible] president of 2 local banks

[illegible] served as president of Twin City Bank of North Little Rock for twenty years

[illegible], conducted a plantation supply business; director of several banks

[illegible] First National Bank of Paragould; had 13 cotton gins and 7,000 acres of land

[illegible] Bank of Pine Bluff

[illegible] Merchants & Planters Bank

[illegible] Merchants & Planters Bank

[illegible] Bank; pres., Chamber of Commerce

[illegible] president of Cross County Bank

[illegible] Federal S&L, dir. of Cross County Bank

[illegible] Cross County Bank; helped est. Merchants & Farmers Gin Co.; financed area industrialization

[illegible] County Bank; built a cotton gin and bought more than seven hundred acres of land, building tenant houses on each forty-acre plot

Georgia

[illegible] change Bank, Albany National Bank

[illegible] Albany

[illegible] Commercial Bank

[illegible] Athens Savings Bank, also its vice-president; president of Chamber of Commerce

[illegible] Athens Savings Bank, also president

[illegible] president of 2 banks, cashier of a third

[illegible] National Exchange Bank; cotton planter

[illegible] merchant; pres., Chamber of Commerce

[illegible] War; Planters' Bank

[illegible] War; Marine and Fire Insurance Bank

[illegible] Central Railroad and Banking Company; father was also a banker

[illegible] War; Southern Bank of Georgia

[illegible] of "many banks"; Savannah mayor (1895)

[illegible] years on the board of several local banks

[illegible] War; Southern Bank of Georgia

Kentucky

[illegible] slave owner

[illegible] of Kentucky; city councilor; and a founder of the local gas company and horsecar lines

Louisiana

[illegible] holder

[illegible] holder in other banks

[illegible] and "some fine cotton plantations and had interests in several country banks"

[illegible] Monsanto

[illegible] Baumbacher

[illegible] Scarpes.

[illegible] Hyams, cousin of Judah P. Benjamin, Confederate leader; was elected lt. gov. in 1859

[illegible] founded town after buying a plantation; established banks, credit unions

[illegible] Natl. Bk.; dir. Chamber of Comm.

[illegible] with Maurice E. Norman

[illegible] with Charles Lehmann

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] banker Samuel Hermann

[illegible] banker Samuel Hermann

[illegible] owner; all 3 sons were bankers

[illegible] Samuel Hermann

[illegible] cotton factors, wholesalers, acted as financial clearinghouse for smaller country merchants

[illegible] Kohn's nephew

[illegible] brother

[illegible] slave owner, "prominent banker, investor... one of the city's wealthiest financiers"

[illegible]

[illegible] & Co.

[illegible] slave owner; in father's banking business

[illegible] Levy

[illegible] founder of Maison Blanche department stores; Stock Exchange co-founder

[illegible] owner; partner of Hart Moses Shiff; shareholder in other banks

[illegible] owner; United States Bank official

[illegible] head of Kuhn, Loeb & Co.

[illegible] shareholder in other banks

[illegible] 30 yrs "a shrewd financier and businessman"

[illegible] slave owner; philanthropist

[illegible] owner

[illegible] supplier

[illegible] of St. Landry Bank

[illegible]

[illegible] Bank; sold to Edward & Benjamin Jacobs

[illegible] Commercial National Bank; elected mayor of Shreveport in 1905

[illegible] Federal Savings & Loan Co.

[illegible] Jacobs B. Jacobs (became First Natl. Bank, then Bank One); son Walter later joined [illegible] Comml. Natl. Bk., Shreveport Natl. Bk. [illegible] of S. Levy & Co. (in 1892 merged into Commercial Natl. Bank); capt. in Confederate Army [illegible] Federal Savings & Loan Co. [illegible] Savings Bank & Trust; plantation owner

Maryland

[illegible] from lotteries into banking and stocks [illegible] Jacob I. Cohen, Jr.; Baltimore city councilman (1826), council president (1845-51) [illegible] owner; Union Bank, bank stockholder [illegible] brother Meyer Stein c. 1871/72; Samuel Stein's son, Simon H. Stein (b. 1874), was a senior member of the bkg. firm at the time of his death in 1913

Mississippi

[illegible] Gattman [illegible] County Bank; board of aldermen [illegible] others [illegible] Merchants & Farmers Trust Co. [illegible] mem. [illegible] Michigan's first bank [illegible] [illegible] & Sons Banking Co. [illegible] director, stockholder of First Natchez Bank [illegible] banked bank [illegible] partnered with brother Maurice in their Natchez Savings Bank [illegible] Moses' partner in the Natchez Savings Bank and in A&M Moses [illegible] First National Bank; city alderman; partner with Isaac Lowenburg [illegible] mayor; cotton trader [illegible] of Woodville; large property holdings [illegible] of Woodville [illegible] known as "Little Jerusalem" [illegible] of Woodville; plantation, saloon owner

Missouri

[illegible] owner [illegible] owner [illegible] in St. Louis

New Mexico

[illegible] secretary of the Territory in 1907 [illegible] First National Bank; served the New Mexico Territory's banking needs

[illegible] Second Natl. Bank; along w. Abraham and Zadoc Staab "controlled the dry goods trade"

[illegible] Santa Fe (1910-1912) and was "twice elected governor" in the 1930s

[illegible], owner

North Carolina

[illegible] Perpetual Building & Loan; deemed "the Building and Loan King of N.C." by newspaper

[illegible] National Bank

[illegible] First National Bank

[illegible] Carolina Bank

[illegible] Watts's Home Savings and Loan

[illegible] mayor pro tem and held other pub. off.

[illegible] Building and Loan Association of Goldsboro; had interests in Goldsboro Savings Bank

[illegible] k of Wayne; helped design a new banking system for the county

[illegible] of the State of North Carolina; enslaved at least 100 Black Africans

[illegible] Isaac and David [illegible], ran a small bkg. business and a drug business on a national scale

[illegible] ized the banking industry"

[illegible] Robinson National Bank; opened a hardware store (1868), which grew into wholesale operation

[illegible] 1830s; Bank of Cape Fear; auction house owner, major landowner, owner of 13 slaves

South Carolina

[illegible] street banker; father was in Ku Klux Klan

[illegible] Southwestern Railroad Bank

[illegible] Commercial Bank of Columbia; Southwestern Railroad Bank

[illegible] ine

[illegible] South Carolina

[illegible] Bank

[illegible] Southwestern Railroad Bank

[illegible] Bank of the State of South Carolina

[illegible] Southwestern Railroad Bank

[illegible] Bank; Commissioner of the Poor-House, 1833-34

[illegible] mers' and Exchange Bank

[illegible] Bank of South Carolina

[illegible] of Camden; slave owner; cotton merchant

[illegible] & Co.

[illegible] State Bank; Union Bank of S. Carolina

[illegible], also a merchant, real estate speculator

[illegible] Bank of the State of S. Carolina

[illegible] Savings Bank, president during 1920s

[illegible] Charleston Savings Institution

[illegible] Bank of S. Carolina; slave owner

[illegible] of Charleston; slave owner

[illegible] Southwestern Railroad Bank, Farmers' and Exchange Bank; politician

[illegible]; Planters and Mechanics' Bank; slave auctioneer; Commissioner of Schools

[illegible] Charleston Savings Institution

[illegible] Bank; c. 1820s large dealer of Black slaves; synagogue trustee

[illegible] (son of Theodore); Natl. Loan & Exchange Bank; Columbia Trust Co.; dir. of Richland Cotton Mill

[illegible] Exchange Bank of Columbia

[illegible] Exchange Bank of Columbia

[illegible] of the State of S. Carolina

[illegible] of the State of S. Carolina

[illegible] of Hamburg

[illegible] of Manning; leading financier in county

[illegible] its first board of directors

Tennessee

[illegible] cotton seller, broker; founder of Memphis Jewish community; city alderman in 1847-48

[illegible] National Bank

[illegible] Mechanics Savings Bank

[illegible] Pennsylvania Bank, Manhattan Savings Bank

[illegible] Bank of Memphis

[illegible] Memphis National Bank

[illegible] Mercantile Bank

[illegible] Manhattan Savings Bank and Trust Co.

[illegible] Manhattan Savings Bank

[illegible] Manhattan Savings, and others; on board of several Memphis banks

[illegible] central boards; led Chamber of Commerce

[illegible] American Savings Bank

[illegible] Commerce & Trust; v.p. and dir. of others

[illegible] Pennsylvania Bank, Manhattan Savings Bank

[illegible] Mechanics Savings Bank

[illegible] Memphis Building and Savings Assoc.; director of Bluff City Building and Loan Assoc.

[illegible] Mechanics Savings Bank

[illegible] Mechanics Savings Bank

[illegible] Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

[illegible] Mechanics Savings Bank

[illegible] Manhattan Savings Bank

[illegible] Memphis National Bank

[illegible] Common Savings

[illegible] Mechanics Savings Bank

[illegible] American Savings Bank

[illegible] Mechanics Savings Bank

[illegible] Manhattan Savings Bank and Trust Co.

[illegible] Memphis National Bank, Manhattan Savings

[illegible] Manhattan Savings Bank and Trust Co.

[illegible] American Savings Bank

[illegible] Savings Bank

[illegible] Common Savings

[illegible] Pennsylvania Bank

[illegible] on several bank boards

[illegible] Nashville Savings Bank

[illegible] Nashville Savings Bank

Texas (d)

[illegible] Victoria in 1844 and three other towns

[illegible] Corpus Christi National Bank

[illegible] Republic National Bank; longtime friend of the head of the Texas Ku Klux Klan

[illegible] bankers

[illegible] Rio Grande Valley Bank & Trust Co.; city council (1893); founded cigar factory, the first in SW

[illegible] Texas banking, cotton, real estate; director in no less than ten banks, stockholder in several others; pres. of Island City Savings Bank

[illegible] National Bank of Texas; cotton, coffee broker; state legislator from 1876 to 1880

[illegible] advertising tycoon Albert Lasker; owned 2 banks, milling business, and extensive real estate; state senator; millionaire

[illegible] ranchers; co-founders of City Natl. Bk. and Alamo Natl. Bk. (Solomon, vice-pres.)

[illegible] owners; founded D. & A. Oppenheimer bank; both bros. served in Confederate Army

[illegible] L. Lazarus

[illegible] Levi

[illegible] wholesale grocery grew into a bank—Levi and Company Bankers

Virginia

[illegible] Richmond; described as the leading

merchant south of the Mason-Dixon Line

[illegible] slave owner; he and Isaiah Isaacs hired Daniel Boone to stake out 5,000 acres in Kentucky

[illegible] owner; son of merchant Joseph Marx

(a) Arkansas had only thirty-nine banks by 1900.

(b) Between 1866 and the 1890s some seven banks were established in Little Rock, and in five of these, Jews were either officers or board members.

(c) Several Jews served on the board of the First National Bank.

(d) B'nai B'rith organizer Charles Wessolowsky wrote in 1878 that "We find here [in Houston] Jewish bankers, lawyers, and merchants doing extensive and large business in all branches of commerce, and even the city clerk and treasurer is a Jew…"

(e) In 1914, the *American Israelite* reported that Dallas Jews constituted 2.5% of the city's population but controlled 11% of its wealth, "a ratio that will probably apply in many sections of the state."

Jewish Success in the KKK South: Department Stores & More

The department store…appeared in almost every city throughout the country, most of them owned by Jews. Macy's, Saks's, Gimbel's, Lit's, Snellenburg's, and Bamberger's are only a few of the numerous department stores which spread throughout the land…

—Rabbi Allan Tarshish

It would be preposterous to most rational people to imagine a thriving, growing, profitable Jewish business in the heart of Nazi Germany, one that cheerfully welcomed the friendship and patronage of Hitler, Himmler, and Gehring. Yet the American South for all its particularly violent forms of racism has an amazingly lengthy history of Jewish business success. By all accounts, Jews in every region of America became the wealthiest of all the immigrant groups and accumulated their wealth faster than any other subcategory of American whites.[657]

Columbia University professor Eli Ginzberg was unequivocal about this fact, claiming that Jews in America "were able to create the largest, most affluent, and secure community in the recorded history of the Jewish people." And according to Dr. Gary Zola, of the American Jewish Archives, "It was the South that spawned a remarkable number of merchant princes who cut their entrepreneurial teeth in Dixie's commercial milieu..."[658]

The fact is that many of the largest and most successful Jewish businesses were founded and developed into major operations in the South under the most racially hostile conditions that have ever existed. And most significant, these Jewish fortunes were made almost exclusively in businesses that were entirely dependent, directly or indirectly, on the forced labor of the Black man and woman. Plantation supply and the marketing of slave-produced goods like cotton, sugar, and tobacco were the sectors in which the largest Jewish fortunes were to be found. Many of America's most majestic department stores began as tiny rural operations in the cotton belt South. Jewish names—the "diadems of Southern Jewish wealth"—were commonly emblazoned across the facades of many of the region's first skyscrapers.[659] According to the American Jewish Historical Society,

> The major merchandising role of the Jewish businessman…was in the establishment of small town specialty stores…[and] large wholesale houses….There is not a Southern city whose main business streets are not lined with department stores and wholesale houses which grew out of this era.[660]

Regionally recognizable Jewish names abound:

Sakowitz's in Houston; Godchaux's in New Orleans; Cohen Brothers in Jacksonville; Rich's in Atlanta; Garfinckels in Washington, D.C.; Thalhimers, A. Rosenstock & Co., and Stern Bros. in Virginia; Guggenheimer's of Lynchburg; Goldsmith's in Memphis. There were Pfeifer's Department Store, the Blass Company, Kempner's, and the M. M. Cohn Company in Arkansas; and Sangers' of Texas. Department stores associated with the great northern metropolises, such as Neiman-Marcus and even the largest jewelry chain, Zales, originated as tiny Jewish retailers in the Jim Crow South.[661] And many mirrored the rapid rise of those in North Carolina, as here described by the Goldring/ Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life:

> Jews also built large department stores in Wilmington, including Einstein Brothers, I. Shrier & Co., and the Rheinstein Dry Goods Company. By 1884, Rheinstein's store was doing over $500,000 a year in business, and employed 12 store clerks and 3 traveling salesmen.[662]

In Indianola, Mississippi—the focus of John Dollard's seminal work *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*—the seven department stores on the town's main street were entirely owned by Jews. In Natchez, the locale of another classic work, *Deep South*, "the wholesale merchants...who once rivaled the banks as credit agencies for planters were, with one exception, Jews." The cotton economy made the city the home of more millionaires than anywhere in the country.[663] In the 1920s, there were 25 Jewish-owned retailers in Asheville, North Carolina.[664] The Jewish-owned Winter Company of Shreveport, Louisiana, was that city's first department store. And late into the 1960s Jews

owned all of the department stores in Memphis, Tennessee.[665]

Jewish businesses, North and South, were willing practitioners of Jim Crow racial discrimination.[666] Adam Gimbel, for example, entered America at the port of New Orleans and made his way up the Mississippi River to open a general store he called the Palace of Trade in Vincennes, Indiana; after Gimbels department store had become a prominent fixture in New York retailing, its owners refused employment to Blacks. The mammoth Macy's hired Blacks only for the lowest-paying positions. Sears was run by Julius Rosenwald, who dictated that none of his stores hire Blacks in any capacity. H.C.F. Koch owned a large department store in Harlem, New York, presumably far, far away from the pressures of Southern racist culture, but he "ignored their [the Blacks'] trade or treated them discourteously." Another major Harlem store, Blumstein's, refused to hire Blacks in anything but menial jobs from the time it opened in 1896 until Black public protests forced a change in 1930.[667] Highly successful Jewish retailers, like Stein Mart based in Greenville, Mississippi, practiced Jim Crow exclusion even after the Civil Rights Movement. In fact, Jewish department stores had become so well known for their racist policies that the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King and civil rights activists often targeted them with their protests.[668]

Upon arriving in Richmond in 1842, William Thalhimer opened a small dry goods store and in fifty years was the largest department store in the city, with branches throughout Virginia and North Carolina. In 1960, police dogs were used to drag Mrs. Ruth Tinsley, the 58-year-old wife of Richmond's NAACP president, away from

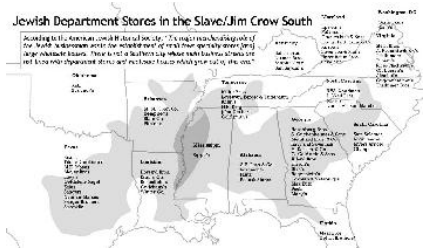
Thalhimers for protesting the Jewish store's segregation policy.[669]

Mrs. Ruth Tinsley being dragged away from Thalhimers by police, 1960.

Louis Pizitz started in Georgia as a peddler in 1889. Such was the scale of Pizitz's success that by 1937 the store was the biggest of its kind in Alabama, employing some 750 people. By 1885, Sanger Brothers in Dallas was described as "an establishment of grandeur, taste and elegance, equal to any in the South." Alex Sanger and his brother Philip owned two of the most opulent residences in all of Dallas, and their biographer reveals that they

> and other Dallas Jewish businessmen participated in the highest echelons of civic power, and they helped to nurture the city's peculiarly striving character.

Herbert Marcus began as a shoe clerk at Sangers' and later joined his sister Carrie and her husband, Al Neiman, to found Neiman-Marcus.[670]



Isidor Straus started in the dry goods business in Talbotton, Georgia, and moved to New York with his brother Nathan, becoming partners in R. H. Macy's in 1888 and ultimately its owners.[671] Other department stores were operated by the Morris Hirsch family, the Regensteins, and Max Kutz, all of whom became household names in the city of Atlanta. In South Carolina was Glymp's general merchandise store; in Mobile, Alabama, A.P. Bush & Co. In the early 1880s, Eckman & Vetsburg's dry goods firm occupied an 18,000-square-foot, four-story building, from which they conducted $750,000 a year in business with Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and Alabama. Meinhard Bros. & Company enjoyed footwear and clothing sales of just under $1 million each year, and S. Guckenheimer & Son sold an equal value of groceries. In Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Leopold Rosenfield established the large retail store bearing his name.[672]

And Jews were not limited solely to mastery of Southern retailing. They were just as prominent in wholesale, as in the field of agriculture, when the economy of the United States was almost entirely agrarian. Julius Gamm emigrated from Poland to Belcher, Louisiana, and soon acquired an 1,800-acre sugar, alfalfa, and cotton plantation, where "farmhands did the fieldwork…[and] picked cotton by hand." Signaling the vast difference in Blacks' and Jews' perceptions of their "common" history,

the Gamm plantation bell is now a cherished acquisition of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, an item that they claim is "a reminder of the hard work, sacrifices, and achievements of the South's Jewish planters." Blacks are "reminded" that two of the Gamm children were able to seek higher education and become a business manager and a lawyer, whilst the children of the Gamm slaves remained plantation field hands.[673]

Isaac Friedlander emigrated from Germany to the United States, settling in Charleston, South Carolina. He left for San Francisco in 1849, where he soon came to be known as California's "grain king," dominating the California wheat market. By the 1870s, "Friedlander's agents were buying and exporting to Europe and Asia…three-quarters of all the wheat grown in California." For eighteen years Friedlander "absolutely controlled the grain market of the State…"[674]

Mitchell Westheimer came to Texas in 1858 and soon purchased a 640-acre tract in what is now central Houston. The Halff family came to control more than six million acres of ranch land in West Texas in the years after the Civil War.[675] The Cohn Brothers of Lorman, Mississippi, started a country store in 1875 and by 1900 were "doing a huge volume of business each year." Their influence upon farming in Jefferson County, Mississippi, "was of major importance."[676] The Stern Brothers became prominent wholesalers in New Orleans in the pre–Civil War era. By 1849, in the midst of Black slavery, Lewis Goldsmith's firm, Goldsmith, Haber & Co., had annual sales in the range of $100,000.[677]

The New Orleans auction firm of Hoffman, Marks & Co. was located at Chartres Street, where many of the larger Jewish wholesalers and commission merchants were housed.[678] Another

substantial auctioneer, Maurice Barnett, was selling everything from farm animals to human beings, "earning" an annual income of close to $100,000 by 1859 (that's equivalent to $2.7 million today).[679]

Herman, Frederick, and Sigmund Myers, of Myers & Bros., distilled bourbon and rye whiskey at their operation in Madison County, Kentucky.[680] They owned Old Dominion Tobacco Works in Richmond, Virginia, the El Modelo cigar factory in Jacksonville, Florida, and the Anchor cigar plant in New York City.[681] A. Beer & Co. was a major New Orleans wholesaler, whose yearly revenues were "in the $200,000 range." Albert Lasker, who was born in Germany and grew up in Galveston, Texas, made Lord & Thomas the largest and most profitable advertising agency in the world.[682]

Samuel Zemurray came to Selma, Alabama, from Russia in 1892 and began his astounding business career as a peddler's assistant. He "installed" himself in the banana trade and through it came to own 3 million acres of land in Central America—more than the combined land areas of the six smallest nations. Nicknamed the "Banana King," Zemurray controlled the world trade of the world's most popular fruit.[683]

Adolph Ochs, a Southern Jew, engineered the success of the *New York Times* but first published the *Chattanooga Times* in 1878 in Nashville, Tennessee. The now defunct financial giant Lehman Brothers began as the owner of "a string of plantations" and slaves. At the turn of the 20th century, the Lehman Brothers firm was a founding financier of emerging retailers, including Sears, Roebuck & Company, F.W. Woolworth Company, May Department Stores Company, Gimbel Brothers, Inc., and R.H. Macy & Company. Nelson Morris became a major operator in Chicago livestock; the

Friedmann family owned the largest wholesale shoe firm in Boston, Memphis and St. Louis; Joseph and Max Weil opened a general store in Kentucky and ultimately came to own J. Weil Brothers in Chicago. Abraham Alexander Solomons came to Savannah in 1845 and organized Solomons Drug Company; another druggist, Isaiah A. Solomons, was a member of Savannah's Cotton Exchange, while "numerous Jews held directorships of local banks."[684]

The editor of the Atlanta-based *Jewish South* was bursting with justifiable optimism about the fortunes of the Southern Jews when he wrote:

> although [Judaism's] growth in all sections of this land of the free has been most prosperous, still the South succeeded in producing the loftiest of fruits, of the greatest bounty and grandeur.[685]

By 1911, New Orleans Rabbi Max Heller saw a divine hand in the prosperity: "In this country we thank God for our opportunities…We are thankful for our rapid progress."[686]

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657 Dawidowicz, *On Equal Terms*, 39; Olegario, "'That Mysterious People'," 187; Benjamin Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger: A Study of Jewish Life in the Small Community* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), 121, 123; Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 30-31. See also Nathan Glazer, "The American Jew and the Attainment of Middle-Class Rank: Some Trends and Explanations," in *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, ed. Marshall Sklare (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1958); Richard L. Zweigenhaft, *Jews in the Protestant Establishment* (New York: Praeger, 1982), 10; John Higham, *Send These to Me: Jews and Other Immigrants in Urban America* (New York: Atheneum, 1975), 144, 164-65; Monica McDermott, "Trends in the Race and Ethnicity of Eminent Americans," *Sociological Forum* 17, no. 1 (March 2002): 142, 146, 147, 150, 153-54. For a direct comparison of the repressive conditions in the American South with those of Nazi Germany, see the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, ed. Israel Gutman (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 1212.

658 Gary P. Zola, "Why Study Southern Jewish History?" *SJH* 1 (1998): 16; Eli Ginzberg, "Jews in the American Economy: The Dynamics of Opportunity," in *Jewish Life in America: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Gladys Levine Rosen (New York: KTAV, 1978), 110. Also, Thomas Sowell, *Ethnic America: A History* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 88ff.

659 Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 356-57; Clive Webb, "A Tangled Web: Black-Jewish Relations in the Twentieth-Century South," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 195-96; Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses*, 6, 7.

660 Clark, "The Post–Civil War Economy in the South," 432. Arthur Hertzberg, *The Jews in America*, 137, wrote that "Three-quarters of all the clothing businesses of all kinds were controlled by Jews. They owned an even higher proportion of the department stores that were then being opened on the 'main street' of almost every city in the country." By 1895, Baltimore-based German immigrant Henry Sonneborn "dominated the South in the sale of men's clothing." Isaac M. Fein, *The Making of an American Jewish Community: The History of Baltimore Jewry from 1773 to 1920* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1971), 134. Mark K. Bauman wrote that Jewish department stores "dominated retail streets in almost every small town and city." See "A Multithematic Approach to Southern Jewish History," 271.

661 Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 345; Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s–1990s* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994), 379-83; Leon Joseph Rosenberg, *Sangers': Pioneer Texas Merchants* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1978), 9-10 and passim; Barkai, *Branching Out*, 63, 81-82. Bloomingdale's was started by a Jewish peddler who had operated in the Western states.

662 ISJL, "Wilmington, North Carolina."

663 Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 344-45; Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town,* 4; Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 41-42; Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *Deep South*, 264; Lewis Lord, "Matzos and Magnolias," *U.S. News & World Report*, 25 May 1998, 55: "Jews also reached the top of Natchez's political and social ladders." Also Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses*, 3, 48; Hoffman, "The Jews of Natchez," 3.

664 ISJL, "Asheville, North Carolina."

665 Brock, *Jewish Community of Shreveport*, 12, 47; Abe Kriegel, "Out of Context: A New York Jew in the New South," *Virginia Quarterly Review* 71, no. 3 (1995): 454.

666 Leon Harris, *Merchant Princes: An Intimate History of Jewish Families Who Built Great Department Stores* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 127.

667 Barkai, *Branching Out,* 81-82; Flade, *The Lehmans,* 39; Yvonne DeCarlo Newsome, "A House Divided: Conflict and Cooperation in African American–Jewish Relations" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern Univ., 1991), 91-92; Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Stein, *Bittersweet Encounter: The Afro-American and the American Jew* (1970; reprint, New York: Schocken Books, 1972), 44; Ownby, *American Dreams in*

Mississippi, 72ff; Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism," 194; Gilbert Osofsky, *Harlem: The Making of a Ghetto: Negro New York, 1890-1930* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 121.

668 David J. Ginzl, *Stein Mart: An American Story of Roots, Family, and Building a Greater Dream* (Tampa, FL: Univ. of Tampa Press, 2004), 58-61. See, for example, the photograph in Bobby M. Wilson, "Race in Commodity Exchange and Consumption: Separate but Equal," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): 601. Also, Clive Webb observed that "Jewish businessmen… would face the brunt of African-Americans['] demands for an end to the evils of segregation." Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 128, 283-324.

669 Elizabeth Thalhimer Smartt, "Thalhimers Department Store: Story, History, and Theory" (Master's thesis, Virginia Commonwealth Univ., 2005), 27.

670 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 127, 126; Stone, "West of Center," 229.

671 Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 301, 304. Straus and his wife, Ida, lost their lives when the Titanic sank in 1912. Straus served in the House of Representatives (1894-95). Ibid., 301, 302. Straus had also sought to aid the pro-slavery Confederate government by selling Black-labor-produced cotton overseas. See Allan Tarshish, "The Economic Life of the American Jew in the Middle Nineteenth Century," in *Essays in American Jewish History* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1958), 270.

672 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 21; Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows,* 23; Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 122-23; Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 231. One million dollars from 1884 is worth $23,900,000 today.

673 See "Times 'Gonged' By: The Gamm Plantation Bell and Other Recent Museum Acquisitions," *Circa* 10, no. 2 (spring 2001): 5. See also Anny Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams: Jewish Emigrants from Alsace-Lorraine to the Lower Mississippi Region and the Concept of Fidelity," *SJH* 2 (1999): 101-2.

674 Markens, *The Hebrews in America*, 146-47; Barkai, *Branching Out*, 82; Supple, "A Business Elite," 154; Kevin Starr, *Inventing the Dream: California Through the Progressive Era* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985), 131; Craig Canine, *Dream Reaper: The Story of an Old-Fashioned Inventor in the High-Tech, High-Stakes World of Modern Agriculture* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1995), 80-82. Friedlander

> grew ostentatiously wealthy…while farmers themselves often labored near the margins of profitability. As the farmers saw it, Friedlander was sucking away their profits….They saw Friedlander as the figurehead of a growing network of bankers, merchants, and middlemen who seemed to have farmers over a barrel. [One] newspaper…lamented that Friedlander "had the wheat growers so completely under his control…that even with

large crops, farmers were growing poor, year by year."

675 Stone, "West of Center," 128-29.

676 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 331. See Turitz and Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi*, 33, photograph on 34.

677 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 120, 179.

678 Ibid., 190. Page 292 n. 26: "An analysis of 167 Jewish businesses showed that Chartres Street was the address for 32 of them, or 19 percent of the total."

679 Ibid., 190-91. Also, Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, "Purchasing Power of Money in the United States from 1774 to 2010," MeasuringWorth, 2009, http://www.measuringworth.com/ppowerus/.

680 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 123-24. In 1899, the Distilling Company of America had been organized—the so-called Whiskey Trust—"by a group of Jewish distillers who for a while managed to control most of the whiskey-manufacturing business in Kentucky." See Stephen Birmingham, *"The Rest of Us": The Rise of America's Eastern European Jews* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984), 199, also 182, 198, 233.

681 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 124; Berkeley, *"Like a Plague of Locusts,"* 140.

682 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 235; Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 347-48. Albert was the son of Morris Lasker, a German immigrant who, by 1880 owned two banks and a milling business and had extensive real estate holdings. Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks,* 2:263.

683 Samuel Zemurray manipulated the internal affairs of the "banana republics" where the profitable fruit was grown. He financed political coups and engineered CIA invasions of countries where he felt his business interests were threatened. It was the underhanded operations of Zemurray's United Fruit Company that inflamed the revolutionary ardor of the legendary freedom fighters Fidel Castro and Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Zemurray's vast banana profits were also a nascent source of funding and political backing for the state of Israel in Palestine. Stephen J. Whitfield, "Strange Fruit: The Career of Samuel Zemurray," *AJH* 73, no. 3 (March 1984): 307-23.

684 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 268; "Lehman Brothers: Who We Are: 1900-1909," Lehman Brothers Inc., 2007, http://www.lehman.com/who/history/1900s.htm; Supple, "A Business Elite," 154; Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 61, 126.

685 Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl'," 78, 80. Blackburn cites *Jewish South*, 8 Feb. 1878 and 7 Nov. 1879. The Jewish newspaper counseled newcomers, "Our resources are innumerable…[W]e can stand afar off and say, go South, young man—go to Georgia." Also, Abraham J. Peck, "That Other 'Peculiar Institution': Jews and Judaism in the Nineteenth Century South," *Modern Judaism* 7, no. 1 (Feb. 1987): 101, 102.

686 Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl'," 1; Bobbie Malone, *Rabbi Max Heller: Reformer, Zionist, Southerner, 1860-1929* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1997), 48.

Whence They Came: A "Swarm" from Alsace–Lorraine

Of the many streams of Jewish immigration, there is none more important to the Black–Jewish relationship than that which originated in the Alsace and Lorraine region of France. Collectively, the Jews from this region found the Mississippi Delta region "especially attractive,"[687] and not a few Jewish scholars have confirmed the value of these "Alsatian Jews" to the development of the American plantation South and to its rebuilding after the Civil War. According to the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, Alsatian Jews "became an integral part of the commercial, political and social make-up" of their rural communities.[688]

In the mid- to late 1800s, the population of Blacks in the Mississippi Delta would reach 90 percent, one of the highest concentrations of Black inhabitants anywhere outside Africa. Here the most brutal forms of slavery were applied and here the most grueling type of labor was endured. Unquestionably, the Mississippi Delta was the most impoverished place in America. It was an

environment so destitute of humane advantages that the cries of human misery gave birth to an entirely new music form—the Blues.[689]

But it is in this place—*of all the places on the face of the earth*—that a steady stream of commercially savvy Jews decided to settle, emigrating from the relative security of their established towns on the French/German border in order to re-establish their homes, set up shop, and make their fortunes anew. This was no insignificant undertaking. Between 1820 and 1915, twenty thousand of these Jews decided to make this journey—bypassing established centers of the Jewish diaspora, including London, Amsterdam, New York, Philadelphia, and Boston—to instead live and work in the bayous, backwoods, and cultural backwater of the undeveloped Mississippi Delta,[690] amidst an enormous population of enslaved Africans. They were part of an unprecedented influx of Jews: between 1840 and 1860, America's Jewish population grew at a rate fifteen times that of the nation.[691]

And within a generation after their arrival, an extraordinary number of these Alsatian Jews were boasting fabulous wealth generated from their business enterprises, and unprecedented civic achievements. In fact, their success happened so quickly that some literally believed that Mississippi —the veritable seat of American slavery—was the Biblical Promised Land.[692]

Many popular Jewish histories imply that the Jewish immigrant arrived in America having barely escaped the pogroms and brutal anti-Semitic regimes of a Europe in political chaos, and that they randomly happened upon the slave system of the American South.[693] But a closer examination exposes this notion as pure mythology.

Long before they formed plans to emigrate, Jews in nineteenth-century Alsace, for many reasons, had to be well aware of the oppressive legal framework facing the Black man and woman in America—if only for their own self-protection. The European Jewish community had a strong knowledge of legal doctrine and centuries of sophisticated wisdom concerning its use and misuse by the European monarchs. What's more, they had experienced anti-Semitic mass disturbances, pogroms, and governmental excesses on a Biblical scale,[694] and thus were particularly aware of the very specific anti-Jewish statutes and governmental edicts that characterized many European societies.[695] They had been fighting such legal barriers and official persecutions for centuries in the courts, the parliaments, the councils, and in the public arena in town squares all over Europe.[696]

It is unlikely, then, that a people possessing this specialized knowledge and activist history, as well as a long tradition of self-government,[697] would uproot themselves from their European homeland and voyage across an ocean to relocate in a wilderness filled with hostile whites and oppressed Africans unless they were totally convinced that the political and legal conditions were favorable to Jewish settlement and commerce. The web of anti-Black slave codes and Jim Crow laws at the very core of the American "justice system" was remarkably similar in many respects to those anti-Semitic laws in place throughout Europe.[698] If the state governments of America had willingly erected these discriminatory legal barriers against the Black majority, certainly it was capable of targeting others, including Jews.[699]

In fact, the migration of Jews from Alsace to the American South was a calculated undertaking with

prior knowledge of the widespread existence of Black African slavery,[700] and several points reinforce this statement. The agricultural conditions of the American South were almost identical to those found in Alsace and Lorraine,[701] where Jewish country merchants filled most of the practical needs of the Gentile peasant farmers scattered on isolated farms. Jews virtually controlled the market.[702] Their dominance in the field of cattle slaughtering was so pervasive that if the weekly market fell on a Jewish holiday, the date had to be changed, "lest the whole population be deprived of meat for eight days."[703]

The Jewish merchant supplied the farmers with short-term credit and took care of other financial transactions.[704] Jewish moneylenders acted as the region's "dominant" bankers, often charging usurious rates of interest and arousing the ire of the peasant class.[705] King Louis XIV of France voiced the frustration of the commoners when he said that "credit supports agriculture, as the cord supports the hanged." One historian wrote:

> Alsatian peasants had acquired a great deal of nationalized land, but without the liquid assets to make their property flourish, the new owners could only turn to the despised yet envied Jewish money lenders.[706]

It was this very familiar role that Jews reprised among the Black ex-slaves in the Mississippi Delta region and all over the American South.[707] The region's extraordinary and untapped potential as an agricultural center had to have been almost irresistible to a people with this kind of background who were seeking unlimited commercial expansion.[708]

Moreover, the Jews of France and Germany had been involved in the burgeoning cotton industries and were in competition with other European states and Asia for primacy over the very lucrative cotton trade. Jews, such as the Frankfurt-based father of the Rothschild banking clan,[709] had been highly successful cotton and textile manufacturers and merchants and were well familiar with the growth and potential of the cotton trade. Alsace itself was located on an important trading route for all slave-produced commodities, so merchants certainly would have learned of the investment potential of the Mississippi Delta, which had long been the greatest cotton-producing region in the world. The potential for world mastery of the cotton business was self-evident and those seeking to corner this international market would necessarily have to set their sights on Mississippi.[710]

Most important—especially in view of the Black–Jewish relationship—America *guaranteed* these immigrant Jewish capitalists a captive Black workforce, whose inferior place in the law and in the economy was secured by the state, and serious resistance by whites (including Jews) to this injustice was virtually non-existent. In America, racial lines were clearly drawn and the white man's right and advantage over the Black labor force were unalterably, unquestionably, unmistakably assured by law and by tradition.[711]

In this respect, the American racial model differed favorably from the European model, where there were avenues by which class differences could be overcome. Thus, in Europe a lowly peasant with a grievance against an upper-class oppressor could join the military, rise through its ranks, and one day seek vengeance as a state authority. No such likelihood existed in America, where her peasant

class (Black ex-slaves), having no recourse in law or custom, was rendered *permanently* powerless, forever locked in society's lowest caste.[712]

Additionally, weighing against the claims of Jewish naïveté was the fact that French Jews were well familiar with Black slavery and had extensive experience in that trade. French Jews had been known to trade in slaves of all races and religions for approximately a thousand years before their emigration from Alsace.[713] By the late 1780s, France's Caribbean colonies produced more than two-fifths of the Western world's sugar and coffee, using exclusively the slave labor of kidnapped Africans. In fact, sugar was an important international Jewish specialty *and* the anchor crop "at the heart" of the slave trade.[714] And despite the empty boast that "There are no slaves in France," the Black slaves of the wealthy French planters often accompanied their captors to French soil.[715] The French Jewish Gradis family held for a time a monopoly of the slave trade from the notorious Gorée Island, the infamous slave-trading depot off the coast of Africa.[716] According to the acknowledged "dean of American Jewish historians," Rabbi Jacob Rader Marcus, Abraham Gradis in 1748 had suggested to the French authorities

> that large numbers of slaves be brought into *the Lower Mississippi valley to work in new agricultural colonies to be created there*. No doubt Gradis had tobacco plantations in mind, and he intended to import about 10,000 slaves directly from Africa, with the financial aid of the French government, which would be invited to fix the price of the slaves.

By this scheme they had hoped to wrest the bulk of the trade away from England.[717] So it is clear that the most elite class of French Jews had obviously scouted out the Delta's potential for settlement and exploitation. Further sealing the case for premeditated immigration is the revelation contained in a French Jew's internal communiqué showing disdain for the very idea of Black emancipation:

> Some evil-minded people have circulated…[the rumor] that the government plans to free the negroes, and I don't doubt that this absurd proposal has made its way to your place. However I am persuaded that a similar piece of news can only excite scorn for those who are its authors. I thought that I should inform you so that if some feeble mind had imagined some uneasiness about it, you could dissuade him.[718]

Thus, the immigrants from Alsace and Lorraine who settled along the Mississippi River Valley were some of the most experienced businessmen in the area of agricultural commerce and some of the most well-informed of any of the immigrant groups. Many among them were moneylenders, who saw the opportunities for economic success among an agrarian people that had just been released from centuries of crippling slavery. Most came as single males without their families and kept their French citizenship, signaling an inclination toward conducting business rather than toward homesteading. Others came to root themselves in the South and settled where the Black population of cotton field laborers was the greatest—in and around Natchez, Vicksburg, and Port Gibson—from

Memphis to New Orleans. They established their retail stores, built their Hebrew cemeteries and synagogues, and embarked upon an aggressive strategy to dominate the trading of all the products of African labor in one of the most fertile regions anywhere in the world.[719]

For these Alsatian Jews, there was no learning curve, no training regimen, no apprenticeship or grace period—and no intention to abolish slavery and its aftermath, Jim Crow. They simply picked up in the American South where they left off in Europe —but with no restrictions on their activities and even fewer legal and social consequences. The Mississippi Delta was truly the Jews' Promised Land, for, according to Ashkenazi, "The attraction of America turned out to be the chance to make a lot more money from familiar occupations."[720]

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687 The Alsace region of France is separated from Germany by the Rhine River. Brock, *Jewish Community of Shreveport,* 7, writes, "Almost all of Shreveport's first Jewish settlers were natives of Germany and Alsace." See also Vicki Caron, *Between France and Germany: The Jews of Alsace-Lorraine, 1871-1918* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1988), 85n, 86.

688 "Over 26,000 Visit MSJE Sites," *Circa* 8, no. 1 (spring 1999): 1. The museum developed a continuing exhibit titled "Alsace to America: Discovering a Southern Jewish Heritage," emphasizing the Alsatian immigrants' "tremendous contributions [to] the small communities that dotted the roads and rivers of commerce." See "The Jews of Alsace-Lorraine: Contributions to Southern Culture," *Circa* 6, no. 1 (winter 1997): 1. See also Pamela Dorn Sezgin, "'Country Jews': Reconsidering 19th-Century Alsatian Jewish Identity in the American Southern United States," paper presented at the 2006 Biennial Scholars' Conference on American Jewish History, Charleston, South Carolina, June 5–7, 2006; Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," 81-110; Clark, "The Post–Civil War Economy in the South," 427; Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 23; Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks*, 2:162.

689 After the Civil War the population of Blacks went from 44,000 in 1870 to 88,712 in 1880. Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), 316, 319-20. For proof of the continued existence of the slave system, see the documentary *The Cotton Pickin' Truth…Still on the Plantation,* S & S Films International, Luv 2 Flo Entertainment, Southfield, Mich., 2009.

690 In 1870, 90 percent of the Delta was virgin wilderness.

691 Rogoff, *Down Home*, 48.

692 See Max I. Dimont on the "Promised Land" theme within the American context, in *The Jews in America: The Roots, History, and Destiny of American Jews* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978), 52-53. See also the Old Testament of the Holy Bible, for descriptions of the "Promised Land." Genesis 15:18-21, 26:3; Exodus 6:4, 24:3-8; Deuteronomy 9:11, 34:1-4. Jewish historian Jonathan Sarna, "Anti-Semitism and American History," *Commentary* 71, no. 3 (March 1981): 47, concludes that if America "has not been utter heaven for Jews, it has been as far from hell as Jews in the Diaspora have ever known."

693 See for instance Harry Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer* (Cleveland: World, 1963).

694 Werner E. Mosse et al., eds., *Revolution and Evolution: 1848 in German-Jewish History* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1981), 32; Paula E. Hyman, *The Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace: Acculturation and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1991), 17, 20-22. Also Glazer, "The American Jew," 144. Under the heading "Causes of Oppression," the *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1901) article on Alsace (vol. 1, p. 461) states: "It must be acknowledged that…the prolonged distrust of [the Jews of Alsace] was not altogether unjustifiable."

695 Mosse et al., *Revolution and Evolution*, 10.

696 Arthur Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1968), 179-87; Taitz, *The Jews of Medieval France*, 22-23. Jews have *always* enjoyed many more rights under the cruelest of European anti-Semitic governments than Blacks ever had under Jim Crow. For instance, in Alsace in the late 1600s Jews had established their own courts of law within their own jurisdiction—an advantage American Blacks have never possessed. See Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment*, 243-44. Also, in 1790 the U.S. Naturalization Law explicitly limited citizenship to "white" persons.

697 Samuel G. Freedman, *Jew vs. Jew: The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 276.

698 In fact, Jews themselves had erected many exclusionary racial barriers within their own societal infrastructure wherever they settled in order to keep dark-skinned Jews out of "our Nation." Jonathan Schorsch, "Portmanteau Jews: Sephardim and Race in the Early Modern Atlantic World," *Jewish Culture and History* 4, no. 2 (winter 2001): 59-74. See a list of anti-Jewish European legislation in James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue* (Cleveland: Meridian Books; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1961), appendix 1. Also, Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker: 1849-1999* (New York: Penguin, 1998), xxi; Lynn Hunt, ed., *The French Revolution and Human Rights: A Brief Documentary History* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1996), 93-97. See Zosa Szajkowski, "Protestants and Jews of France in Fight for Emancipation, 1789-1791," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 25 (1956): 119-35.

699 See Joseph Sherbow, "The Impact of the American Constitution Upon the Jews of the United States," *PAJHS* 43, no. 3 (March 1954): 159-69.

700 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 261. Also Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," 92-94; Clark, "The Post–Civil War Economy in the South," 429; Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 19; Harold C. Livesay, *Samuel Gompers and Organized Labor in America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), 15.

701 See "Alsace," *JEncy,* 1:455-63.

702 Freddy Raphael, foreword to *Scenes of Jewish Life in Alsace,* by Daniel Stauben (Malibu, CA: Joseph Simon/Pangloss Press, 1991), xiii; David Peal, "The Politics of Populism: Germany and the American South in the 1890s," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 2 (April 1989): 345-47, 351.

703 Raphael, foreword to *Scenes of Jewish Life in Alsace*, xiv. Compare with this statement about the Jewish slave-dealing monopoly in Brazil quoted in Arnold Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil* (Morningside Heights, NY: Columbia Univ. Press, 1960), 72-73:

> The buyers who appeared at the [slave] auctions were almost always Jews, and because of this lack of competitors they could buy slaves at low prices....If it happened that the date of such an auction fell on a Jewish holiday the auction had to be postponed. This occurred on Friday, October 21, 1644.

See also Marc Lee Raphael, *Jews and Judaism in the United States: A Documentary History* (New York: Behrman House, 1983), 14.

704 Raphael, foreword to *Scenes of Jewish Life in Alsace*, xiii, xv.

705 In the 1791 debates concerning Jewish "emancipation," an Alsatian authority insisted that Jewish usurers "held notes to the amount of twelve or fifteen millions of francs against debtors whose personal estate never exceeded three millions in value." "Alsace," *JEncy,* 1:462. And despite the proscriptions against Jews owning land, it is estimated that in the late 1700s "one-third of all mortgages in Alsace were in Jewish hands." See Hyman, *The Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace*, 13, 14, 22-23, 25, 26, 32-33ff, and 49; Jay R. Berkovitz, *The Shaping of Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century France* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 42-43; Jacob Katz, *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770-1870* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1973), 176ff; Mosse et al., *Revolution and Evolution*, 33, 11 and note 21; Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," 87, 89-90. Also, see *EJ* (1972), s.v. "moneylending"; Caron, *Between France and Germany*, 166-67, 170-71; Cecil Roth, "The Economic History of the Jews," *Economic History Review*, n. s., 14 (1961): 131; Joseph Shatzmiller, "Opposition to Jewish Moneylending: Between Theology and Politics," chap. 3 in *Shylock Reconsidered: Jews, Moneylending, and Medieval Society* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1990), 43-70; Scott B. MacDonald and Albert L. Gastmann, *A History of Credit and Power in the Western World* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001), 41-51. On p. 47 MacDonald and Gastmann discuss Europe in the Middle Ages:

> Licensed to lend, the Jews became cursed as "bloodsuckers" and "usurers" living off the debts of the Christians. As Professor Kenneth Stow of Haifa University comments, "Lending was perceived as a Jewish act; lenders themselves were considered (even legally) to be Jews."

706 Muhlstein, *Baron James*, 44.

707 Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 103 n. 22; Zola, "Why Study Southern Jewish History?" 11. See also Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 245-47. According to Jewish historian Herbert G. Gutman, "No doubt it is true that in this generation the peasantry of Russia, Germany and other European countries suffer much wrong at the hands of Jewish usurers and extortioners." See his article "The Knights of Labor and Patrician Anti-Semitism: 1891," *Labor History* 13, no. 1 (winter 1972): 66.

708 Barkai, *Branching Out*, 61.

709 Derek Wilson, *Rothschild: The Wealth and Power of a Dynasty* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 23, 178; Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker,* 92; Georg Heuberger, *The Rothschilds: A European Family* (Sigmaringen, Germany: Thorbecke, 1994), 36, 39; S.D. Chapman, "The Foundation of the English Rothschilds: N.M. Rothschild as a Textile Merchant, 1799-1811," *Textile History* 8 (1977): 99.

710 It is known, for example, that the "proslavery" Jewish Texan Jacob de Cordova studied the world cotton market before calculating how he could invest in the development of the Texas cotton industry. In England, he purchased machinery and hired spinners and weavers willing to immigrate to Texas. Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 24-25; Caron, *Between France and Germany*, 171. Also, Cordova anticipated the admission of Texas into the Union and bought up a million acres of land in advance to sell to the new settlers. See Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 2:74.

711 Allen Kaufman, *Capitalism, Slavery, and Republican Values: Antebellum Political Economists, 1819-1848* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1982), 132.

712 See Stephen J. Whitfield, "In the High Cotton," review essay, *SJH* 4 (2001): 127. The Jews of Alsace may also have had direct experience with importing African slaves. When opposing the pro-Jewish reforms before the National Assembly (session of Sept. 21, 1789), a deputy from Upper Alsace "was especially vehement in his defense of 'his hard-working and unfortunate compatriots, who were oppressed in a most atrocious manner by a horde of cruel Africans that swarmed over the country.'" This is an odd juxtaposition of issues that brings "cruel Africans" into a debate concerning Jewish civil rights in France. It suggests that the deputy believed that Jews were responsible for the presence of the Africans. The article's author does not explain this reference or refute the underlying implication. Sixty-five years prior to this, King Louis XV expelled the Jews from the French territories of America (what is now the Louisiana area) and severely limited Black slavery in edicts he issued known as the *Code Noir* or Black Codes—again, an odd juxtaposition of seemingly

unrelated issues. It suggests that Louis XV believed (as did the deputy in Alsace) that the two issues were bound by the slave trade and that in order to get rid of slavery he would have to "get rid of" Jews. Evidence of Jewish dominance of the slave trade in both of these times makes this the most plausible explanation. See Mathé Allain, "Slave Policies in French Louisiana," *Louisiana History* 21, no. 2 (spring 1980): 129-130; "Alsace," *JEncy,* 1:460. See also *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* 1:208 n. 793.

713 Taitz, *The Jews of Medieval France*, 30-32, 35, 56-57, 187. Also, Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 31.

714 See "Sugar Industry and Trade," *EJ*, 15:487-88.

715 Sue Peabody, *"There are no slaves in France": The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1996), 3, 4, 7. One notable legal case in 1775 involved two Blacks enslaved by a wealthy French Jew named Isaac Mendès France, who had made his fortune by investing in cotton and coffee plantations. The Africans charged that the Jew starved them, branded them, refused to clothe them and frequently beat them. According to one historian, "There is no reason to doubt" their claims. See ibid., 8, 106-9, 178n. The court ruled in favor of the Black victims but the Jew simply flouted the ruling and had the Africans arrested.

716 Richard Menkis, "The Gradis Family of Eighteenth Century Bordeaux: A Social and Economic Study" (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis Univ., 1988), 154-57.

717 Emphasis ours. Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew, 1492-1776,* vol. 2, *The Slave Trade* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1970), 699; Jacob Rader Marcus, *American Jewry: Documents, Eighteenth Century* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1959), 326-29; Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews*, 92. See also the entry on Abraham Gradis in *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* 1:240.

718 Peabody, "There are no slaves in France," 111.

719 Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," 89-90, 99-100; Michael Schuman, "Landmarks Recall Jewish Heritage Along the Mississippi," *Dallas Morning News*, Dec. 9, 2001, http://www.dallasnews.com/travel/unitedstates/stories/jewishsouth_00tra.ART.d7432.html.

720 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 173. He adds (p. 268): "Jews managed to transfer their shopkeeping experiences to the southern United States without great difficulty." See also ibid., 257. Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History*, 31: "Religious persecution, often cited as a major reason for Jewish immigration, served primarily as a background factor."

The Black and White Reality of Southern Capitalism

As a people with strong mercantile roots and experience, Jews came to the South with a mind to reorder and strengthen its economic underpinnings. In fact, this focus was built into their ancient Talmudic codes and institutions. The Jewish temple in ancient Babylonia had "vast wealth at its disposal," and "constituted the richest agricultural, industrial, commercial, and financial single unit within the community." It was "the largest landowner, the greatest industrialist, the richest banker, and the biggest slaveholder in every city of the country."[721] As authors Ohrenstein and Gordon conclude,

> [I]t would seem that if some departments of the Temple are to function properly, it must be a major centre for the exchange of economic intelligence. Almost certainly, it could have housed some of the best applied economists in the nation.[722]

Economics was the Jews' forte, and, as has been shown, ethnic whites of the region welcomed them for this extraordinary skill. A wholly ignored reality of the Black–Jewish dynamic is the role of Jewish merchants in using the tools and influence of the marketplace—not to destroy racial injustice, but to strengthen and reinforce white supremacy entirely for their own financial benefit.

One of the most sophisticated and influential Southern economic theorists was the Jewish South Carolinian Jacob Nunez Cardozo. He was born into a prominent Southern family in 1786 that included

a number of wealthy merchants, synagogue officials, and even the Supreme Court judge Benjamin N. Cardozo (1870–1938). In 1817, Jacob N. Cardozo became editor of the *Southern Patriot,* a prominent newspaper based in the slave-trading center of Charleston, and he often contributed his writings to many other publications. One Jewish economic historian judged Cardozo to be "the ablest pre–Civil War economist of the country."[723]

Organized American Jewry supported, protected, and benefited from slavery,[724] and "their allegiance to the South and the Confederacy was complete."[725] Cardozo applied his formidable intellect toward proving the fiscal soundness of that position. He was a staunch conservative Democrat (when the Democrats were the party of slaveholders) and a loyal Confederate, who acquired a considerable reputation as a sound thinker on political and economic matters. He viewed the enslavement of Blacks in purely economic terms and saw the abolitionist movement as a "conspiracy against property." The abolitionist press he condemned as "an engine of destruction and death," and he further believed that the "scheme…of elevating the slave is one that has no warrant in history or in the knowledge of human nature."[726]

To Cardozo, slavery was economically and morally justified, and the African was particularly suited to the role of slave laborer. Black slaves made better workers than white wage earners—and were morally and intellectually inferior to whites to boot.[727] "The reason the Almighty made the colored black is to prove their inferiority," Cardozo reasoned, yet he modeled a society built entirely upon the shoulders of Black labor. In his *Reminiscences of Charleston* (1866), he lamented the

plight of the poor former slave masters:

> The owner of two hundred to five hundred slaves, with a princely income, has not only to submit to the most degraded employments, but he frequently cannot obtain them. In some instances, he has to drive a cart, or attend a retail grocery, while he may have to obey the orders of an ignorant and coarse menial. There is something unnatural in this reverse of position—something revolting to my sense of propriety in this social degradation.[728]

Cardozo was even more optimistic than Gentile economists about the potential for economic growth under slavery. Thomas Dew, for instance, admitted that slavery and economic development were incompatible in the long run. Cardozo vehemently disagreed and found other societal benefits of Black enslavement. Blacks were valuable as scapegoats, he argued, slavery fostered unity among whites, and the racial division mitigated class conflict.[729] Not only that, slavery would fit in neatly with the emerging industrialization and accelerate more growth than the costlier wage-based system. The slaves, with their lower maintenance costs, could be used in industry performing repetitive tasks; and the "surplus" slaves could be sold, with the revenues invested in the building of factories. According to Cardozo's biographer:

> He reasoned that if 76,000 [excess] slaves were sold at $300 each, it would yield enough money to establish 100 factories….He estimated that this would convert the equivalent of 100,000 bales

of cotton into manufactured goods.

Cardozo maintained that others of the slave population should be made to grow food for the emerging manufacturing class, and he regarded slave property as "the only real fiscal resource in South Carolina."[730] He kept to this view even as the world turned against slavery and most Gentile economists predicted that it would be obsolete in a transformed industrial society.[731]

The cruel, calculated commerce in human beings clearly did not trouble Cardozo or his Jewish contemporaries. His approach to Black–Jewish relations as a purely financial, rather than moral, matter was ultimately shared by the Jewish business world that emerged in America in slavery and beyond.

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721 Isaac Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949), 99-102.

722 Roman A. Ohrenstein and Barry Gordon, *Economic Analysis in Talmudic Literature: Rabbinic Thought in the Light of Modern Economics* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 32.

723 Morris U. Schappes, *The Jews in the United States: A Pictorial History, 1654 to the Present* (New York: Citadel Press, 1958), 52; Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo*, 7, 173. An extraordinary amount of slave-trading was carried on by South Carolina Jews, and the very center of America's Jewish community in the slavery era was Charleston. See *Jews Selling Blacks* (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 2010).

724 See *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, 1:139-55.

725 Schweikart, *Banking in the American South*, 217.

726 Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo,* 8, 176, 186, 195-96. Similarly, the historian and president of the Southern Jewish Historical Society, Leonard Rogoff, explained in his recent book why Jews of North Carolina did not invest heavily in slaves: "In 1845 a slave that cost $722 could be hired out for $143 a year, for a return of 18.5 percent, but that declined to 10 percent by 1860. Few saw it as a worthwhile investment, apart from whatever scruples they felt about slavery." See his *Down Home*, 61. Like Cardozo 150 years ago, Dr. Rogoff today calculates the crime of slavery in purely financial terms, presenting no evidence of the said scruples.

727 Kaufman, *Capitalism, Slavery, and Republican Values*, 132-35.

728 Berson, *The Negroes and the Jews*, 10-13; Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 1:425; Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery," 193; Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo,* 202.

729 Kaufman, *Capitalism, Slavery, and Republican Values*, 132-34, 135; Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo*, 179, 186.

730 Kaufman, *Capitalism, Slavery, and Republican Values*, 134; Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo,* 181, 181-82 n. 23, 183, 199, 201. For ancient Jewish parallels concerning slaves in industry, see Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East*, 112-17.

731 Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo*, 197; Harold D. Woodman, review of *Capitalism, Slavery, and Republican Values: Antebellum Political Economists, 1819-1848*, by Allen Kaufman, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 16, no. 1. (summer 1985): 150-52. Cardozo found other benefits of slavery as well. It was Cardozo (or his brother Isaac) who raped a Black woman, who consequently bore a child. See Henry L. Feingold, *Zion in America: The Jewish Experience from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Twayne, 1974), 61.

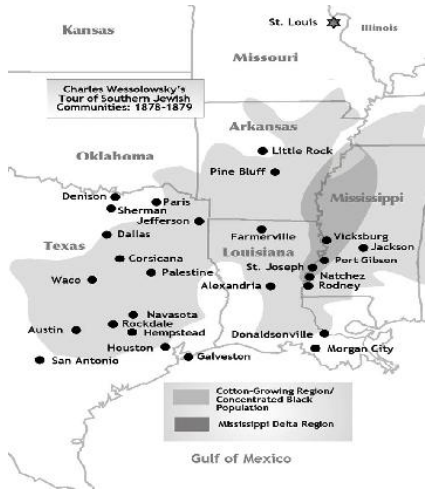
Alabama native Philip Phillips, a Jewish "jurist and statesman," similarly believed that his state's high (slave-based) cotton production could generate enough revenue to fuel its planned industrial expansion. David T. Morgan, "Philip Phillips, Jurist and Statesman," in *Jews of the South: Selected Essays from the Southern Jewish Historical Society*, eds. Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1984), 114ff.

"Vast and Extensive Business": Charles Wessolowsky & Jewish Dominance in the South

Upon landing in New York in 1858, German-born Charles Wessolowsky headed south to Sandersville, Georgia, where he took up peddling. In 1875, he had become so well respected that he was elected to be state representative and later state senator—the only Jew to have held both these offices.[732]

During the course of his Southern travels, Wessolowsky pioneered several B'nai B'rith chapters and edited the *Jewish South* newspaper. In 1878 and 1879 he traveled throughout the Black Belt, keeping a detailed journal that provides a revealing glimpse of an important Southern phenomenon: Jewish business success throughout the South. The following pages contain Wessolowsky's own observations of this reality in the various cities and towns he visited.

Dr. Louis Schmier, the Jewish historian who analyzed Wessolowsky's correspondence, believes the observations not only serve to question the prevalent "myths" that the Jew "refus[es] to be assimilated," but also put to rest the notion that "the South is a violent and savage place in which all minorities fear for their lives."[733] Wessolowsky, a journalist, Confederate veteran,[734] senator, and devout Jew, would have found such notions absurd. His most common observation: "As usual, our brethren have the sway of business."



Arkansas

Little Rock

"Our co-religionists, who are thrifty and good merchants, are in a prosperous condition."

Pine Bluff

"Our co-religionists, who are mostly engaged in mercantile pursuits, are doing well, and some of our brethren are pursuing agriculture to a very large extent. Thus, Mr. Gabe Meyer, the President of the congregation, owns nineteen plantations, all of which are cultivated very successfully; and Mr. Sol Franklin, brother of our host, has about nineteen hundred acres in cotton, from which he expected to realized [sic] a handsome profit."

Louisiana

Alexandria

"Alexandria] is quite a business place and our Israelites...are carrying on an extensive business, and are very much respected by the Gentiles. Many of them hold responsible positions. Our host, Mr. Ed. Weil has been honored with the mayorality [sic] of the city; Jonas Rosenthal, a member of their city council and Mr. Moses Rosenthal is Treasurer of the Rapides Parish —all holding their functions to the satisfaction of all." (a)

Donaldsonville

"Donaldsonville is one of the most flourishing little cities in the state, and, as usual, our brethren have the sway of the business, and are doing well..."

Morgan City

"Our co-religionists here, as elsewhere, are engaged in the mercantile pursuits, and D. Stein & Co. is doing the

largest and most extensive business in this part of the country. H. Brown, and others, are also doing a good business."

"Morgan City"

"The Israelites here are all engaged in mercantile business and doing well."

"The Israelites here are enjoying a very good reputation, some of them are Aldermen of the city, and seem to do very well."

Mississippi

"Jackson"

"All our brothers here are all engaged in mercantile pursuits and the majority of them seem to do well and prosper."

"Natchez"

"Through the kindness of Mr. Frank, we had an opportunity of examining his mammoth building and stock of dry goods, boots and shoes, etc., kept by him for wholesale trade only, and which will favorably compare with any stock in the city of New Orleans and other places. There are also other large business firms as G. A. Jacobs, our host Mr. Loevenberg and others, too numerous to mention. In all, our brothers here are, as usual doing the largest business of the place, and are doing well." "Our Israelites are drifting strongly toward being agriculturists, and a great many of them have a plantation of their own, and are rentors [landlords], and thus reproducing the occupation of our ancestors, and which seems to be to them a very prosperous business." (b)

"Port Gibson"

"Our Israelitish brethren are very much respected, they are carrying on the largest business houses as L. Kiefer & Co., Wm. Kahn, and others, are a pride to any community, and no doubt give evidence of the prosperity of the city."

"Rodney"

"Monday night, having been requested by all Israelites, and some Gentiles...to lecture there, and the Presbyterian church having been offered for that purpose, we could not decline, and although it being but a small city, yet the audience was very fair and appreciative."

"Vicksburg"

"The Israelites here number about one hundred families, as usual, they have the sway of the business and are well off. There is not one retail dry goods carried on by a Gentile."

Missouri

"St. Louis"

"Our brothers...are also aiding vastly to the grandeur and elegance of this, the rival city of Chicago, and

many of them are carrying on extensive manufacturing, wholesale and retail business, and are also large property holders."

Texas

"All seems [sic] to be in good circumstances, doing well and are very much respected among the Gentiles. Many of them are carrying on a vast and extensive business, and some of them are old citizens of Austin..."

"Otherwise our Israelitish brethren here seem to be prosperous, and are carrying on extensive business."

"The Israelites here, in their various avocations and stations of life, are aiding vastly in bringing about the desired success for Dallas and some of them are enjoying the reputation and fame of doing the largest and most extensive business in the city. We enter the business house of Sanger Bros., and we at once perceive and behold an establishment of grandeur, taste and elegance, equal to any in the South, and so systematically and well arranged, that in the opinion of some travelers it surpasses any business North....There are also magnificent and mammoth establishments kept by our co-religionists, which are all a credit and honor to any city."

"We found perhaps ten Jewish families, all engaged in mercantile business, and getting along."

"We were pleased to see that our Israelitish brethren are adding vastly to the progress, advancement and promotion of the city, and in fact as to its commercial standing and extensive houses, they are the first and foremost in the city, such large and mammoth commercial firms as L. & H. Blum, S. Heidenheimer & Co., G. Rauger & Co., Lasker & Co., Greenleave, Block & Co., Bernstein & Co., and others too numerous to mention, representing all branches of commercial industry each doing business by the millions, are seldom to be found in any city South, and are an honor and pride to our race."

"The place...affords large business houses and we find here some of our brethren carrying on quite an extensive business and others are also engaged in agricultural pursuits....Here in these prairies, where I am told, stock business is very remunerative and prosperous..."

"Our people here can boast of wealth, talent,

prominence and are much respected by the Gentiles. We find here Jewish bankers, lawyers, and merchants doing extensive and large business in all branches of commerce, and even the city clerk and treasurer is a Jew…"

"Our Israelitish brethren here…are carrying on the largest business in the place. The wholesale house of K. Mendel & Co., with their large and extensive stock of merchandise kept in various warehouses, consisting of all kinds that may be wanted or needed in their section of the country is doing business by the millions and is indeed a pride and honor to any city, and we may safely say that but very few are its equal. This and many other large houses carried on by our brothers, too numerous to mention, exhibit clearly to the stranger that here our brothers have the entire control of the mercantile business and no doubt, like anywhere else is a prospective feature for good."

"All of them are employed in their daily avocation of life, working in their mercantile business to the best advantages and profits of their own."

"Our Israelitish brethren are also aiding liberally in building up the city, and a great many of them are real estate owners, and those that suffered by the late fire are now replacing their old wooden buildings by fine brick store-houses, two stories high. All seems [sic] to be in glee and full of good prospects, satisfied with true Palestine…"

"We found good society, schools, churches and other institutions, which build up a community. Our Jewish population is aiding vastly in making Paris a city, in every sense of the word."

"Our brothers here are all engaged in the mercantile pursuits and are doing well."

"Our Israelites here are doing a very extensive business, and some of them are indeed great rivals of the king merchants of Galveston, Messrs. Goldfrank and Frank, Half and Co., Z. Oppenheimer & Co., and others too numerous to mention, are doing business by the millions, and are very much respected in the mercantile world."

"The most extensive and largest business is done by Messrs. Schneider & Co., and co-religionists, who have a most elegant and beautiful business place, tastefully and splendidly arranged, and are doing well. There are many other large business houses carried on by

brothers and all seem to progress fairly."

"Our Israelitish brethren here…are indeed front in rank in every branch of industry and commerce….Such business houses as those of Lessing, Lyons, Solomon & Co., of which firm, our friend, Mr. Meyer late from Pensacola, is now a partner, are indeed but very few in the State; and in point of taste, elegance, style, and beauty, equal to any North or West. This mammoth establishment, and that of Messrs. Gauger Bros., adds greatly to the attraction and beauty of the city, and brings no doubt a great many strangers to Waco to purchase their goods, who otherwise perhaps would seek another channel. There are also other large business houses carried on by our brethren, yet not on such an extensive scale as the above named, and we were proud to find them here, also enjoying a high standing and a good reputation….They are also large property holders and have as far as we could ascertain, the handsomest buildings in the city. The storehouse of Messrs. Lyons, Solomon & Co., is indeed grand and a pride to any city, and the private residence of Messrs. Alexander, Solomon, Sanger, Lewine, Lyons, and others too numerous to mention, are numbered among the most elegant and costly structures within the city."

(a) The census reported that in Rapides "To a considerable extent, the merchants, the chief of which are Jews, have heretofore *got about all [the cotton] the negro made, whether that was one bale or ten.*" See Otken, *The Ills of the South,* 76. Otken's emphasis. (b) By comparison, see W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Economic Future of the Negro," *Publications of the American Economic Association*, 3d ser., 7, no. 1 (Feb. 1906), 232: "[A] few days ago I stood on the land of a white Alabama land-owner who held 50 square miles and would not sell a single acre to a black man. This land is the best land of these regions."

In 1876, a letter to the editor of the Cincinnati-based *American Israelite* confirmed Wessolowsky's account of Southern Jewish business prominence. The correspondent stopped in Helena, Arkansas: "Like in all places in this State, the majority of the merchants are Israelites, and almost without exception prosperous."[735] In Vicksburg, Mississippi: "The business houses, however, are very substantial

for a Southern city, and the same enterprise which characterizes our co-religionists elsewhere is observable here." In Natchez, Mississippi: "the *Jehudim*, though but few in number, stand high in the social scale and are staunch adherents to the cause." And in Bayou Sara, Louisiana: "The Israelites here are well-to-do, and appear to be liberal in principle and purse on the whole…"[736]

The result of all this concentrated Jewish economic activity—in the very heart of American white supremacy—was unprecedented Jewish wealth and prosperity.[737] Carolyn Lipson-Walker surveyed the Jewish condition long before the Civil Rights Movement and found that "In every Southern town and city, the Jews live in the wealthiest neighborhoods" in "beautifully furnished homes," and "own luxury cars, and fine clothes and jewelry." Many of the homes, she continues, are designed by architects and are professionally landscaped and decorated. In a gathering of Southern Jewish women, "it is unusual to see diamond solitaires in engagement rings that are smaller than one carat and a half."

Their "astonishing" economic accomplishments have made it so that "Virtually no Jews in the South have blue collar jobs."[738] This attitude was certainly captured in the sentiments expressed by a nineteenth-century Jewish immigrant seeking to set up a retail business in Miami—a city that would come to have one of the highest concentrations of Jews in the world. Isadore Cohen ultimately became one of the city's most successful businessmen, but when he first arrived in Miami in 1896 it was suggested "that he hire himself out to help clear the land for the city's streets." Cohen remembered it like this:

> I was told to take a job clearing land, whereupon I tried to impress this naïve lady that the last labor of this character my race had performed was in the land of Egypt, and that it would be a violation of my religious convictions to resume that condition of servitude.

Historian Marvin Dunn wrote that Cohen's attitude "was probably typical" and thus "the grueling and dangerous work of breaking the stubborn land fell primarily to blacks..."[739]

The "spectacular successes" in the Jim Crow South were accompanied by the increased presence of housekeepers in Jewish homes. "Like middle-class, upper-middle class, and upper class white, Christian Southerners" Jews "employ a black maid as cook and cleaner."[740]

Sixty years after the end of chattel slavery, a survey of some 286 Black farm families in North Carolina found that "Not a Negro family…had running water, an indoor toilet, or a bathtub in his home."[741]

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732 Schmier, *Reflections of Southern Jewry*, 6, 17. Sandersville is the place where The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad was born in 1897. In the 1870s and 1880s Louis Cohen served as the town's mayor. See Sandy Berman, "Southern Jewish History at the Breman Museum," *The Rambler* [Southern Jewish Historical Society newsletter] 12, no. 4 (summer 2008): 3.

733 Schmier, *Reflections of Southern Jewry*, 171, 173.

734 Louis Schmier, "An Act Unbecoming: Anti-Semitic Uprising in Thomas County, Georgia," *Civil War Times Illustrated* 23 (Oct. 1984): 24.

735 According to a correspondent for the *Atlanta Constitution* (29 April 1888), from Forrest City to Helena, Arkansas,

> it is all one unbroken area of the finest lands on the continent….It is a notable fact that negro labor…is the source of all the wealth of this beautiful region. Just let them have an exodus all of a sudden, and all business, all property would collapse like a balloon that had burst.

According to ISJL, "Helena, Arkansas": "By 1880, Jews dominated the retail trade in Helena."

736 "Down the Mississippi," *American Israelite*, 21 Jan. 1876, 2; Hoffman, "The Jews of Natchez," 5. In a recent book on Vicksburg Jewry the author, Iuliu Herscovici, states ludicrously that the city's Jews "were never a part of the plantation economy," even though the city's official seal, which depicts three cotton bales encircled by a wreath, is printed on the book's cover. See *The Jews of Vicksburg, Mississippi* (Xlibris, 2007), 63, cover. Herscovici discusses the city's acceptance and tolerance of Jews, in ibid., 84-85, 110, 148-49.

737 Elliott Ashkenazi writes that "many Jews substantially increased their wealth." "Some Jews lived quite lavishly" and realized "spectacular successes." See Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 37, 209-10, 237, 265, 268-69; Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 27-31.

738 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 58-59. Rogoff, *Homelands*, 76: "Jewish culture traditionally disparaged manual labor."

739 Marvin Dunn, *Black Miami in the Twentieth Century* (Gainesville, FL: Univ. Press of Florida, 1997), 56-57. Practically all of the hard physical labor involved in building the city of Miami was done by Blacks.

740 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 59-60. See also Ferris, "Dining in the Dixie Diaspora," 232; Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 182; Alfred O. Hero, Jr., *The Southerner and World Affairs* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1965), 485. During slavery, according to Rabbi I. Harold Sharfman, *Jews on the Frontier* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1977), 186:

> "housekeeper" was actually a euphemism for "concubine." Some of the most prominent New Orleanians preferred to mate with their "housekeepers" rather than legally marry according to civil if not religious law.

741 Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture*, 230. The investigation was carried out by the North Carolina Tenancy Commission in 1922.

King Cotton: King of the Jews?

Cotton now became king again…—it became a ruthless dictator.

—E. Merton Coulter, *The South During Reconstruction*

The profits in cotton were stunning. In 1864—when a horse could be purchased for $25, an acre of prime farmland could be bought for less than a dollar, a congressman's monthly salary was $420, and a small commercial building could be acquired for $600—a single 500-lb bale of cotton could reap a profit of $900. Over half a century later, the value of cotton had not diminished. President Jimmy Carter reminisced that as an industrious young boy of nine in the farming town of Plains, Georgia, he sold peanuts for five cents a bag. He sold twenty bags and made $1 per day—more than some farmers made. Selling the peanuts afforded him the opportunity to buy five bales of cotton. He then waited, watched the price triple, and sold the cotton, a deal that enabled him to buy five old houses and collect rent at $16.50 per month. Carter quickly diversified and eventually parlayed his enterprising cotton transactions into the status of millionaire, and ultimately the presidency of the

United States of America.[742] Multiply this simple episode thousands of times and you essentially have the history of how the Jews had come to these shores as "penniless" immigrants and quickly became the wealthiest single ethnic group in America.[743]

Cotton is synonymous with the American South and central to the heritage of the region. It is regarded by many white Southerners with religious zeal, and it inescapably accompanies every nostalgic journey through Old South history and culture. But cotton's role in the American experiment is far more important than Americans have been willing to admit. According to a recent book by Gene Dattel, a financial manager at Salomon Brothers and at Morgan Stanley:

> [C]otton was the leading determinant of American history in the 19th century. It prolonged slavery, and slave-produced cotton caused the Civil War. Cotton spawned two revolutions, the industrial revolution and the American civil war.... [It] was the first sophisticated global business…[744]

For 134 years between 1803 and 1937, cotton was America's largest export and this slave-grown staple was the single biggest engine of western expansion. Cotton was at the very foundation of the American economy, and it drove the exploding textile and clothing industries in New England and turbo-fueled economic and industrial growth worldwide. Indeed, cotton was to the world economy in its era what oil is to the present.[745] It is the single biggest proof that western civilization was built by the sweat, blood, and tears of Black African men, women, and children, and that the

culture cotton created is at the very root of the multiplicity of miseries affecting Black people to this very day.

Without cotton, slavery in the "New World" was very likely headed for extinction. The invention of the cotton gin in 1793, a machine that efficiently separates the seeds from the fiber, sped up cotton production fiftyfold, instantly making it much more profitable and desirable.[746] The new technology changed the clothing and textile business in the blink of an eye. The miraculous fiber could be formed into almost any type of cloth or garment and dyed in any pattern. As the manufacturing methods became more refined, so too did the range of products. Cotton fiber could be made into rope, curtains, upholstery, and clothing; woven densely for warmth or loosely for hotter climes; and could even be made to mimic fine silks at a fraction of the cost. The whole world clamored to be re-clothed in cotton, and that escalating demand put the Black man and woman on the auction block in increasing numbers, just as demand for sugar did generations before. Cotton quickly became the most profitable business the world had ever seen, raising King Cotton to its iniquitous throne.[747]

One cannot overstate the value of cotton to American and world prosperity, and, correspondingly, cotton's direct connection to Black misery.[748] In the decade following the invention of the cotton gin, the amount of cotton the United States produced increased a stunning 2,233 percent, with more than half exported to Great Britain.[749] Between 1800 and 1860, cotton's expansion doubled the number of slave states from eight to fifteen, as cotton quickly became seventy percent of American exports.[750] By 1840 cotton exports were greater than all other exports combined, effectively

making cotton's two million African slaves more valuable than any other American commodity.[751] In the 1850s, the South was home to 75,000 cotton plantations and was the international focus of the cotton trade. At the height of its primacy, the American South generated three-fourths of the world's cotton supply and at least 6 of every 10 Africans worked directly in cotton production.[752] The others were largely engaged in growing food and building housing for use by the cotton slaves; constructing roads, bridges, and ports for cotton shipping; and tending the homes and families of cotton masters. Overseas was no different in terms of the resources dedicated to supporting the cotton commerce. One British economist considered the investment his nation had made in textile mills:

> The lives of nearly two millions of our countrymen are dependent upon the cotton crops of America; their destiny may be said, without any kind of hyperbole, to hang upon a thread. Should any dire calamity befall the land of cotton, a thousand of our merchant ships would rot idly in dock; ten thousand mills must stop their busy looms; two [million] mouths would starve, for lack of food to feed them.[753]

As civil war loomed, one leading Southern senator echoed that sentiment:

> What would happen if no cotton were furnished for three years?...England would topple headlong and carry the whole civilized world with her, save the South. No, you do not dare to make war on cotton. No power on earth dares to

make war upon it. Cotton *is* King.[754]

And France was said to be "much more dependent even than England on American cotton."[755] One British visitor in 1858 accurately summed up the South's total dependence on the cotton trade:

> Mobile—a pleasant cotton city of some thirty thousand inhabitants—where the people live in cotton houses and ride in cotton carriages. They buy cotton, sell cotton, think cotton, eat cotton, drink cotton, and dream cotton. They marry cotton wives, and unto them are born cotton children. In enumerating the charms of a fair widow, they begin by saying she makes so many bales of cotton. It is the great staple—the sum and substance of Alabama. It has made Mobile, and all its citizens.[756]

Cotton was the motive for the development of a vast and expanding international web of finance, politics, transportation, and communications—a global network that relied entirely on the forced enslavement of an entire race of people.

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742 Jimmy Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight: Memories of a Rural Boy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 152-53; "Jimmy Carter: Not Just Peanuts," *Time Magazine*, March 8, 1976, http://www.time.com; Frank J. Welch and D. Gray Miley, "Cotton Labor Requirements," part 2, *Journal of Farm Economics* 32, no. 4 (Nov. 1950): 752.

743 See Hertzberg, *The Jews in America*, 131ff.

744 Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), x-xi, and passim; Gene Dattel, "Cotton and Race in the Making of America," lecture at the B.B. King Museum in Indianola, Mississippi, November 11, 2009, C-SPAN Video Library, http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/id/217828. Dattel points out that Karl Marx, considered the father of communism, was financed by Friedrich Engels, whose family had grown wealthy on cotton textile

manufacturing. See also ibid., 36.

745 Elliott Ashkenazi, "Jewish Commercial Interests Between North and South: The Case of the Lehmans and the Seligmans," in *Dixie Diaspora: An Anthology of Southern Jewish History*, ed. Mark K. Bauman (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2006), 198; Ronald Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade and the Development of Capitalism in the United States: The Textile Industry in New England," *Social Science History* 14, no. 3 (autumn 1990): 388; Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo*, 189. Additionally, Southern cotton mills often financed the building of local schools and churches. See August Kohn, *The Cotton Mills of South Carolina* (South Carolina Dept. of Agriculture, 1907), 133-76.

746 Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 33. Cotton production in Mississippi "exploded from nothing in 1800 to 535.1 million pounds in 1859." In Georgia, it went from 3,138 bales in 1790 to 177,824 bales in 1810. See ibid., 52, 40.

747 Beverley Lemire, "'A Good Stock of Cloathes': The Changing Market For Cotton Clothing In Britain, 1750-1800," *Textile History* 22 (1991); Ronald Bailey, "The Other Side of Slavery: Black Labor, Cotton, and Textile Industrialization in Great Britain and the United States," *Agricultural History* 68, no. 2 (spring 1994): 35, 36, 39. Consequently, the demand for slaves soared and slavery became more entrenched than ever. See also *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* 1:190 n. 727; Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo*, 176 n. 8.

748 Farrow, Lang, and Frank, "Cotton Comes North," chap. 1 in *Complicity*, 3-41.

749 Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade," 388. Also see Dr. Ronald Bailey's chart titled "The Fabric of Civilization: Slavery and Cotton in the U.S. and British Economy, 1790-1860," in "The Slave(ry) Trade and the Development of Capitalism in the United States: The Textile Industry in New England" (Dept. of African-American Studies, Northeastern University, Boston, 1990, photocopy).

750 Bruce Levine, *Half Slave and Half Free: The Roots of Civil War*, ed. Eric Foner (New York: Hill & Wang, 1992), 20; Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade," 388; Bailey, "The Fabric of Civilization."

751 Enslaved Africans represented two-thirds of a plantation family's total wealth, with half of the remainder in the land they worked. See Carter, *An Hour Before Daylight*, 18-19.

752 Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo,* 175 n. 6.

753 David Christy, *Cotton Is King* (Cincinnati, 1855); David L. Cohn, *The Life and Times of King Cotton* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1956), 122-23; George S. Bush, *An American Harvest: The Story of Weil Brothers–Cotton* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982), 26-27. A front-page story in the *NYT* (4 July 1871) reported the mass emigration of Britons because of "the hard times and lack of food occasioned by the cotton famine." See tables 3A, 3J, and 3K in Stuart Bruchey, *Cotton and the Growth of the American Economy, 1790-1860: Sources and Readings* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967); Bailey, "The Other Side of Slavery," 40ff; Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 36-38, 82-83, 98, 99, 177-83.

754 Sen. James H. Hammond of South Carolina (March 4, 1858),

quoted in Edward C. Kirkland, *A History of American Economic Life* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1951), 159; Bailey, "The Other Side of Slavery," 40, 36. See also the comments of New York City pastor Rev. C.T. Walker in the *AC*, 5 May 1901, A8.

755 D. A. Farnie, *The English Cotton Industry and the World Market, 1815-1896* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 149; David Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue: The Fortunes of August Belmont* (New York: Dial Press, 1981), 205.

756 Hiram Fuller, *Belle Brittan on a Tour, at Newport, and Here and There* (New York, 1858), 112.

A Kosher Cotton Connection

If there is one indisputable, incontrovertible, irrefutable fact in the history of America, it is that Blacks picked cotton. It is the American commodity that is most associated with the crime of Black African slavery. And by political, social, and economic design Blacks continued unchanged in this role long after slavery's legal end.[757]

Less known is the intimate connection between cotton and the Jewish people and the critical role both played in catapulting the South out of pure backwoods wilderness and into a great international center of the world's cotton economy. So intimate is this bond between Jews and cotton that the Jackson, Mississippi-based Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience chose as its official insignia a photograph titled "Shabbat Cotton," which depicts a kosher table setting in front of a window overlooking a large field of cotton crowns ready for harvest. It describes the scene as "depict[ing] *Jewish tradition* in the Mississippi Delta"—"a defining image of Jewish life in the South today."[758] The Museum states explicitly that one can

> better understand southern Jewish family, economic, and cultural life by examining fascinating artifacts in a recreated home, *cotton factor's office*, and synagogue.

The Museum's placement of the "cotton factor's office" within a vital Southern Jewish trinity—*even listing it ahead of the synagogue*—shows cotton to be the predominant element of Southern Jewish life, playing a significant role in Jewish *self-perception*.[759] The Museum's "mission statement" further solidifies

the Jewish–cotton bond, claiming that "The golden age of southern Jewry" was a period in history "when cotton was king."[760]

In fact, cotton in the American South could well have been called Jewish gold. The sheer volume of capital it generated for the world bears out the wisdom of Jewish concentration in the production and marketing of cotton. In 1901, the *Jewish Encyclopedia* made an astounding claim that put Jewish Americans at the epicenter of the slavocracy:

> [T]he cotton-plantations in many parts of the South were wholly in the hands of the Jews, and as a consequence slavery found its advocates among them.[761]

The *Atlanta Constitution* calculated that in the thirty years after "emancipation," the nation's cotton crop generated nearly $8.5 billion (now worth $224 billion)—nearly triple the amount of money generated from the production of gold and silver in the United States in the previous century. It continued:

> And all the gold mines of the world have not produced enough gold in 500 years to pay for thirty crops of the south's cotton; and all the silver mines of the world for same 500 years produced $500,000,000 less than the value of the south's thirty years' cotton crop.[762]

Natchez, Mississippi, was the heart of the cotton/slavery economy and the home to more millionaires per capita than any other place in the country in 1860. As Jewish journalist Charles Wessolowsky observed, "a great many" of "our

Israelites…have a plantation of their own, and are rentors [landlords]…which seems to be to them a very prosperous business."[763] One scholar wrote that

> In Natchez Jews who had been small-time retailers suddenly found themselves major suppliers and cotton agents to hundreds of area farmers, both black and white….[They] soon had huge wholesale supply houses and cotton factoring businesses in downtown Natchez.[764]

Rabbi Jacob Rader Marcus continued the theme of cotton's *sacredness* when he maintained that the Jewish businessmen of South Carolina "*ministered* to the planters," some "becoming quite wealthy."[765] The famed Southern Jewish writer David L. Cohn believed cotton was "a form of mysticism…a religion and a way of life…omnipresent here as a god is omnipresent."[766] Cotton in the Delta "was the staple of our talk, the stuff of our dreams, the poesy of many of our songs." His intoxication with cotton culture induced him to believe that he could speak for the Black men and women who grew and picked the crop. "Negro household servants," he maintained, "anticipated their annual cotton-picking expeditions to the fields." With a virtual tear in his eye he waxed nostalgic:

> No sight was so stirring as the silvery flashings of hoes in the hands of a hundred Negroes getting the cotton out of the grass. No encounter was so warmly pleasant as riding homeward on a horse at first dusk to meet field hands riding the mules to the lot, each politely tipping his cap to the boss man and saying softly,

It was through the cotton trade, and to a lesser extent sugar,[768] that Blacks—as slaves and sharecroppers—and Jews—as traders and merchants—confronted each other. Accordingly, "the cotton factor's office" is the key to not only "understanding" the Jews of the South, but also understanding the Black–Jewish relationship long before the advent of the civil rights era. Moreover, it is the most significant key to understanding why Black progress "mysteriously" stalled after the so-called emancipation. Cotton was arguably the most important single factor in the American Jews' phenomenal acquisition of wealth and, *at the same time*, the commodity most responsible for the oppression and economic decline of Blacks in America. Thus, it is essential to consider cotton—and the part it played in this inequitable equation—in any analysis of the Black–Jewish relationship.

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757 Southern governments spent great energy to keep Blacks out of the mills and factories and all automated industry except farming, mining, and logging, and housecleaning for women. See Rayford W. Logan, *Betrayal of the Negro: From Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (1965; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1997), 152-55; Gavin Wright, "The Economic Revolution in the American South," *Economic Perspectives* 1, no. 1 (summer 1987): 163. Also, Black mathematician Kelly Miller's discussion in "Negro Repels Attack," *Washington Post*, 3 Sept. 1905, 5. Poor whites represented just "one-ninth of the whole cotton force of the country." Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture*, 206.

758 Emphasis ours. *Circa* 8, no. 2 (fall 1999): 7.

759 "Previewing *Alsace to America: Discovering a Southern Jewish Heritage*," *Circa* 7, no. 1 (spring 1998): 2; David Sampliner, "My Southern Road Trip," *Circa* 10, no. 2 (spring 2001): 9; also Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams," 101.

760 Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, "Program Mission: Why We Do What We Do."

761 *JEncy* (1901), s.v. "agriculture."

762 Samuel W. Goode, "Turning to the South," *AC*, 6 June 1897, 3. Three decades earlier the same paper estimated that if the South used all of its arable land for growing cotton, it could generate $9 billion *annually*. See "Cotton," *AC*, 18 June 1869, 2.

763 Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses*, 3; Schmier, *Reflections of Southern Jewry*, 47; McGraw, *Two Covenants*, 136.

764 Hoffman, "The Jews of Natchez," 5, 3. One popular Southern writer was explicit in describing the region: "The background and support of [Holly Springs, Miss.] is cotton, cotton grown chiefly by negroes…[A]nd out of it comes a thriving trade that greases all the wheels, and sustains schools and churches." See "Bill Arp's Letter," *AC*, 30 Jan. 1887, 16.

765 Emphasis ours. Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 2:31. Also, ibid., 35, 59, 61, 82.

766 James C. Cobb, ed., *The Mississippi Delta and the World: The Memoirs of David L. Cohn* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1995), 61.

767 Ibid., 64-66.

768 See "Sugar Industry and Trade," *EJ,* 15:487-89.

The Cotton Factor: "The Power Behind the Throne"

Cotton is the backbone of the industrial and the commercial south. Its title of king is no misnomer….Picture the south without cotton and you will be reviewing a condition of things well-nigh unthinkable! Yet the average man [or] woman…realizes but vaguely how indispensable a part cotton plays in the foundation of our commercial superstructure.

—

Atlanta Constitution, 1904

The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience spoke of the "cotton factor's office," a heretofore unknown entity in the history of Black slavery—at least to most Americans. To most, the figurehead of American slavery was the all-powerful plantation owner, who forced the Africans he bought and

enslaved to till the soil, plant, weed, and pick the endless rows of cotton. Almost all the popular attention to slavery has focused on the violent white-on-Black cruelty inherent in this labor-intensive operation, where a direct and obvious link can be made between the blood-soaked hands of the white man and the suffering of the Black African. But the white plantation master accounts for only one of the malignant forces behind slavery's operation. Yet to be held accountable are the middlemen merchants whose hands were both red with African blood and green with the profits of African labor. It can be said without exaggeration that these behind-the-scenes merchants profited from slavery *even more* than the planter himself.

Before the Civil War, the cotton factors were essentially middlemen traders who, for a hefty commission, played the key role in marketing the nation's chief cash crop. Through his Northern business connections, the factor was able to draw needed capital into the Southern economy to finance cotton production and the spread of slavery. Furthermore, his knowledge of the local, national, and international market conditions and his skill in preparing cotton for sale made him an indispensable aid to the planter.

From his seaport office, the factor supplied the planter with everything necessary to produce his crop—tools, seed, mules, slaves, money, et cetera—and carried away the bales of cotton after harvest.[769] The factor graded the crop for quality, secured storage facilities, arranged its transportation, insured it against loss or damage, and negotiated credit terms with his contacts in other regions like New Orleans, New York, and Liverpool.[770] He would then be trusted to turn a profit by warehousing the cotton as needed until

the market justified making the sale. *The factor then paid the planter* and kept a hefty profit for himself.[771] And here Dr. Joe Gray Taylor relays a remarkable fact:

> From the proceeds of the crop he [the factor] collected the advances made to the planter and the interest thereon. What was left, if any, was the planter's money profit for the year. Usually this money was left with the factor, and the planter drew on it as necessary. *More often than not, however, the planter had bought so much during the year that he was in debt to the factor even though his farming operations might show a profit.*[772]

In other words, the cotton factor, it could be argued, was the power behind America's slave economy; and the plantation owner was virtually *working for the cotton factor*, often depending entirely on him for wages. This is no small revelation, for if the white plantation master is subservient to the cotton factor, then the enslaved Black African is also toiling on his behalf. The plantation owner, from this point of view, is merely the head overseer responsible for managing *the factor's* plantation affairs. Alfred H. Stone said plainly of the factor: "If cotton was king, the cotton factor was *the power behind the throne*."[773] The plantation owners of Dixie legend were little more than bit players in a much larger economic reality in which they took more orders than they had the power to give. As Ashkenazi understated it, "The southern factor played a pivotal role in the southern economy."[774]

With the collapse of the plantation system at war's end, the power of the cotton factor waned,

but the critical role he had played was taken over by a new brand of Southern merchant that flooded the Southland. The many new country storekeepers dotting the countryside became more important in the cotton trade and ultimately replaced the factor as the critical link in the chain of cotton marketing. They were strategically positioned to deal directly with the various local growers (many of them now ex-slaves), and many provided additional processing services like ginning and baling, which increased their access to the cotton and the immense profits derived from these transactions.[775] And because these countryside cotton merchants had now become the financial arm of the plantation system—the funnel through which all the capital in the region flowed—banks considered them the safest business risk in the South, more secure even than the planter. It is no surprise that the American Jewish Archives published a study that confirmed that "Many individuals at both ends of this new system of mercantile organization…were Jews."[776]

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769 Woodman, "The Decline of Cotton Factorage," 1219-20. "Similarly, if the planter needed cash for the purchase of slaves or land or for any other purpose, the factor was asked to supply it..." Also, Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture*, 50ff.

770 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 116-17.

771 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 31.

772 Emphasis ours. Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1974), 392. See also a description in Cohn, *The Life and Times of King Cotton*, 162-63.

773 Emphasis ours. Alfred Holt Stone, "The Cotton Factorage System of the Southern States," *American Historical Review* 20, no. 3 (April 1915): 562. See also Woodman, *King Cotton*, 175; Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 20; Manford Eugene Jones, "Problems of Cotton Marketing," chap. 5 in "A History of Cotton Culture Along the Middle Brazos River" (Master's thesis, Univ. of New Mexico, 1939), Robertson County TXGenWebSite, Robertson County Historical Commission, http://www.rootsweb.com; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 31; Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 81-82ff; George D. Green, "Banking and the Allocation of Credit," chap. 1 in *Finance and Economic Development in the Old South: Louisiana Banking,*

1804-1861 (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1972), 28-30.

774 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 29-30. For example see Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 116-18. See also Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews*, 104-35; Horace Mann Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama: A Study in Cotton and Steel* (1939; reprint, New York: Octagon Books, 1969), 122.

775 M.B. Hammond, "The Southern Farmer and the Cotton Question," *Political Science Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (Sept. 1897): 461; Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 377, 382; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 34-35; Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture*, 63-65; L. Tuffly Ellis, "The New Orleans Cotton Exchange: The Formative Years, 1871-1880," *JSoHis* 39, no. 4 (Nov. 1973): 546ff.

776 Canter Brown, Jr., "Philip and Morris Dzialynski: Jewish Contributions to the Rebuilding of the South," *AJA* 44 (1992): 518; Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 1:216-17.

The Jewish Factor in the Lan' ob' Cotton

I wish I was in de lan' ob' cotton, Old times dar am not forgotten, Look away! Look away! Look away! Dixie Land.

Well before the end of slavery Jewish merchants were operating high-volume business ventures in the cotton fields of the Deep South, and many became cotton factors. In fact, cotton was the economic magnet that brought Jewish immigrants to America's slave states. By 1821, Samuel Myers had positioned himself to profit from the cotton trade in Mobile, Alabama. Salomon (Sol) Andrews of Huntsville and Tuscaloosa, Alabama, was a cotton factor and commissioner of a bank around 1829. Jacob Hart's possessions in 1830 included "thirteen slaves and a 5-year-old slave child employed in the [cotton] presses…" His warehouse contained an astonishing 12,000 bales of African slave-picked cotton worth $300,000 (today's value: $7,940,000).[777]

In Petersburg, Virginia, in 1832, Samuel Mordecai was director of "a large cotton manufacturing company employing about 200 operatives" and shipping internationally. David Salomon of Mobile was a cotton factor circa 1839. The three Weil brothers operated a cotton business in Alexandria, and Jacob Wolf and Michael Burgower, owners of a general store in Woodville, Mississippi, were considered "large dealers" of the

staple crop.[778] Tuscaloosa cotton merchants Bernard Friedman and Emanuel Loveman were said to have land holdings that "extend over a large territory in Alabama," which they rented out to miners, farmers, and timber companies.[779]

Between 1830 and 1880 Savannah played a leading role in the South's cotton economy, and a "handful" of Savannah Jewish firms functioned as cotton factors. In 1860, the Jewish firms Octavus Cohen & Company, Cohens & Hertz, and Abram Minis supplied Savannah-area plantations with everything from farm tools and cottonseed to slave clothing and food and then marketed the planters' crops. Minis sold and speculated in cotton for himself and his clients and had interests in other crops as well.[780]

Throughout the Civil War, immigrant Jews found the cotton business irresistible, encountering no barriers to their entry. In 1863, the *Examiner* newspaper alleged Jews had bought up two-thirds of Alabama's cotton and monopolized the mercantile business throughout the South. In Larissa, Texas, the partnership of Levy, Simon & Co. ran a small store, which was used to smuggle cotton out of the country in support of the Confederate war effort.[781]

Two Jews, H. Peres and M. Wolf, were working south of Memphis in 1863, "buying cotton and staying at a Christian's home on the river." Another notable Jewish cotton factor was David Shlenker, who was born and died in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Henry Kline operated plantations and stores in the rural Mississippi towns of Cameta, Onward, and Anguilla. Herman Cohn was born in 1862 in Cracow, Poland, yet soon after his arrival in America he bought a cotton plantation in Greenville, Mississippi, where he was welcomed by

the local Gentiles with open arms.[782]

In Opelousas, Louisiana, Jews held extraordinary power and "owned up to two-thirds of all agricultural land," yet Blacks were forbidden to come into the town without permission of employers and subject to curfews and fines of $5 or five days labor. No Blacks could live in town unless they were the servant of a white resident; and Blacks could not own firearms, sell or barter goods, or preach without a license.[783]

Additionally, "Jews benefited as did others from the westward extension of cotton culture…across the Mississippi River." In Texas, Jewish merchants in Calvert and Hearne took a heavy profit as independent cotton buyers.[784] French Jew Felix Halff bought and sold cotton in the gulf coastal region. In 1863, the Confederate Army bought nearly two tons of middling grade cotton from his cousin Meyer Halff. Felix formed a partnership with William Moses, bought Texas cotton, and exported it to Mexico. Sometime during the winter of 1863–1864, they purchased 750 bales of cotton and tried to transport them illegally but they were confiscated by the U.S. Army.[785]

Marilyn Kay Cheatham Goldman studied Jewish merchants operating in Texas and found that

> cotton brokering and processing swiftly pushed all other industry aside. Cotton became the way to make money, and Galveston merchants built warehouses to hold cotton, grading rooms to grade it, and presses to compress the bulky commodity.[786]

When, in 1879, Galveston businessmen began planning to open a new Cotton Exchange, Jewish

investors included the firms of Heidenheimer Brothers, Marx and Kempner, Leon Blum, and M. Kopperl. They ultimately built "the 'handsomest' Cotton Exchange in the United States." Broker Paul Levyson boasted that he paid "the highest market price in goods and cash for cotton." Rudolph Oscar's daughter Gussie eventually ran the Waco Cotton Palace. Alex Sanger served as vice-president of the Dallas Cotton and Woolen Mills.[787] According to Isaac Markens, German immigrant Morris Ranger settled in Galveston and became "one of the largest cotton operators in the world."

> He opened a house in Liverpool, where he for several years *held the key to the cotton trade of the world*. In 1881 he engineered a "deal" which resulted in a profit estimated in the millions.[788]

Harris (born Herschell) Kempner emigrated from Poland and went into the cotton warehousing business in Galveston. By 1870, he had become one of the largest cotton magnates in the Southwest. An "avid land investor" and organizer of railroads, Kempner owned real estate all across the state, and served as director in no less than ten Texas banks before his eldest son, Isaac, took charge of the firm. He worried about crop diversification because cotton formed the sole wealth-building commodity in Texas and "set the rhythm of all business."[789] Kempner biographer Harold Hyman wrote that the family patriarch never recognized the racism that was evident all around him:

> [If Kempner] saw a contradiction between the sweet and wide access to opportunity that he and other Jews enjoyed in America, and the reshrunken,

> sour, narrow paths that blacks could traverse, they were untroubled in mind about it and left the perception unrecorded.[790]

By 1885, *Bradstreet's* journal figured that there were 164 interior cotton markets in the southern states, and Jewish merchants, it seems, dominated every one of them.[791] According to Elliott Ashkenazi, there were "a surprising number of Jewish storekeepers in Clinton, Woodville and elsewhere…operat[ing] in the countryside within the interstices of the cotton trade." Appropriating the callous language of the trans-Atlantic Holocaust, Ashkenazi calls the cotton business a "triangular trade among cotton growers, storekeeper and factor."[792] In fact, cotton buying was such a commercial success that

> the activities of the merchants-ginners-buyers became the nucleus of a very noticeable growth in southern towns.[793]

Arkansas' economy depended on cotton, and, according to scholar Carolyn Gray LeMaster, "a number of Jews in the state dealt in cotton-growing, cotton-buying, and cotton-selling." Little Rock's Adolph Hamberg (1849–1936) "became the most prominent Jew in that trade" and a partner with Max Mayer. He established Ad Hamberg and Company Cotton Buyers and became an agent for Lesser-Goldman Company of St. Louis, the largest domestic shipper of cotton in the nation. When the Board of Trade was set up in the 1880s, 17 of the 80 listed members were Jewish, with Adolph Hamberg serving as president.

Prior to his partnership with Jacob Goldman (1845–1922), Julius Lesser owned a mercantile firm

that handled a stunning sixty percent of the cotton grown in the Forrest City and Marianna areas. Lesser was a stockholder in several banks and served as city treasurer and as alderman in Marianna. He moved to St. Louis and founded Lesser Cotton Company, which became "one of the most successful cotton firms in the nation." When he ultimately teamed with Goldman, they grew to become the giant Lesser-Goldman Company. By sending buyers out into the field to consolidate the rural trade, they revolutionized the cotton business.[794]

Other Jews in the Arkansas cotton trade were Samuel Lyons and Max Frauenthal, who owned one of the largest stores in the northwest part of Arkansas. Cotton buyer Jacob Jacobson was involved in the state's purchase of a plantation to be used as a prison—another repressive component of the Jim Crow South.[795]

The Clinton, Louisiana, economy at the turn of the twentieth century was based on cotton (20,000 bales in 1900), and Jews, according to Benjamin Kaplan, did a large business with farmers and landowners. In fact, Jews were a "well-integrated part of the total community," even though "its Negro citizens…were very poor."[796]

The Weil family of Alabama became one of the world's leading cotton merchants, having started out by taking crop liens (a type of farmer's mortgage, discussed later) on the cotton farms and plantations in the Reconstruction South. By 1900, they had expanded into Memphis, Dallas, and Houston with an annual volume ranging from 250,000 to 500,000 bales—when the yearly average production in all of America was about 10 million bales.[797] Vicksburg, Mississippi, was home to "many" Jewish dry goods merchants and cotton

factors, who all "prospered," as was Port Gibson with its fifty Jewish families, all of whom became wealthy.[798]

New Orleans was not only home to the vast majority of Louisiana's Jewish population, but, not coincidentally, "the marketing center for cotton and sugar and the source of supplies for the agricultural community." By the Civil War, close to 70 steamboats a week (3,566 in 1859–1860) were arriving in New Orleans loaded with the products of African slave labor.[799] The city also functioned, according to Ashkenazi, as the "financial clearinghouse" for cotton money and for the merchandise that moved throughout the New Orleans countryside.[800]

It is not surprising that authority over a staple crop held in "almost sacred regard" was ceded to the "People of the Book." Nor should it be surprising that the synagogue in Shreveport, Louisiana, was on Cotton Street. The *New Orleans Times* reported with pride that one Jewish cotton firm in the city received an astounding 125,000 bales every year.[801] Hart Lichtenstein, for example, owned "some fine cotton plantations and had interests in several country banks."[802]

Leon and Mayer Godchaux arrived from Alsace and began as peddlers in the 1830s and '40s. By century's end they owned more than 30,000 acres of prime farmland throughout the South, and they began acquiring Black slaves and cotton, which they stored in Woodville and Summit, Mississippi. They paid a bargain price of ten cents per pound for the 46,200 pounds early in 1862. By war's end its value had quadrupled.[803]

And this abundance of cotton profits led to charges that those engaged in the business were unduly influencing the political process. According

to an 1884 article in the *New York Times,* the "wealthy Hebrew cotton speculator" Adolph Mayer of New Orleans had "bought and paid for the nomination of the Democratic Party in the First Congressional District."

> The sum of $12,000 was named as having gone into the hands of certain party bosses, who in turn were to deliver the goods without subjecting Gen. Mayer to further inconvenience. The accusation of bribery and corruption so boldly made met with no denial.[804]

It should be remembered that "delivering the goods" in the Southern political system often included acts of violent voter intimidation against Blacks, who almost exclusively voted Republican.

Sugar can not be overlooked in the Black–Jewish equation, for it was at the heart of the trans-Atlantic slave trade before the ascendancy of cotton. Jewish involvement in the sugar industry dates back to the Middle Ages, when sugar refineries were often Jewish-owned. Jews played a leading role in introducing sugar cultivation to the African coastal islands and later to the Caribbean. In fact, Jewish merchants made Brazil the most important area of sugar production in the world. According to the *Encyclopedia Judaica*,

> [I]n the second half of the 17th century many Jews emigrated to Surinam, Barbados, Curacao, and Jamaica, where they acquired large sugarcane plantations and became the leading entrepreneurs in the sugar trade. Benjamin d'Acosta introduced sugarcane to Martinique in 1655, bringing with him 900 Jews.[805]

In the nineteenth-century American South, Solomon Block partnered with Edward Feibleman to purchase a 1,900-acre sugar plantation in St. Mary's Parish, Louisiana.[806] Jacob Lemann loaned money to some of the "best sugar plantations in the state," which were secured by mortgages. After the war, many planters defaulted, allowing Lemann to acquire the properties at a fraction of their fair value.[807] Leon Godchaux became a major financier of the sugar growers in the Delta region, and by the late 1800s he owned ten plantations.[808] Louisiana grew 95 percent of the total American sugar crop before the Civil War and Godchaux, known as the "Sugar King," was at the center of this growth.[809] He even built a railway system that operated on and between his own sugar plantations. Of all the Louisiana plantation railroads, these were considered to be in a class by themselves.[810] According to W.E. Myers,

> [W]hen [Godchaux] died [he] was the owner of fourteen large sugar producing estates—the best in the country as a matter of fact—and of three central refineries...More than 2000 persons were employed on these plantations….He employed high-priced chemists and managers….[and] left an estate valued at $6,000,000 or more…[811]

His holdings were so vast and his wealth so great that Leon Godchaux became the largest sugar producer in the South and the largest taxpayer in Louisiana. An article in the most prestigious Jewish historical journal assessed him thus:

> His impact on Louisiana cannot be measured. Judging him on his career, it

is possible to say that he was the most important person in the economy of that state in the nineteenth century.[812]

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777 Bertram Wallace Korn, "The Jews of Mobile, Alabama, Prior to the Organization of the First Congregation, in 1841," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 40-41 (1969-70): 473-74, 489; Bertram Wallace Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 101-3. Korn discusses many Jews in the cotton business, several engaging in international trade. See *The Early Jews of New Orleans,* 117-18, 126, 131, 172-74, 304, 308; LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 98: "A number of [Jews] became large furnishing (outfitting) merchants and cotton buyers. As such, they became agents of the highly speculative cotton trade…"

778 Louis Ginsberg, *History of the Jews of Petersburg: 1789-1950* (Petersburg, Va., 1954), 24-25; Korn, "The Jews of Mobile," 493; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 228, 250.

779 ISJL, "Tuscaloosa, Alabama."

780 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 34, 115-19. On page 134, Greenberg claims that "Few Savannah Jews involved themselves directly in the region's cotton economy but instead followed national patterns by focusing their energies on the dry goods and clothing trades"—trades that directly served and supported (and were supported directly by) "the region's cotton economy." Contrariwise, Greenberg states (p. 118): "Periodically… Jews advertised themselves as commission merchants or cotton factors…"

781 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 69-70; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 248.

782 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 75; Schuman, "Landmarks Recall Jewish Heritage Along the Mississippi"; Philippsborn, *History of the Jewish Community of Vicksburg*, 70-71; Cobb, *Mississippi Delta and the World*, xii, xiii, 3. Cohn was the father of the previously mentioned Southern romanticist David L. Cohn.

783 Gerald L. Gold, "A Tale of Two Communities," in *The Jews of North America,* ed. Moses Rischin (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1987), 227-28; Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 98; Vincent Harding, *There Is A River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), 313. Gold writes (p. 228): "the Jews of Opelousas…accumulated considerable wealth in land and in what was to become profitable oil and gas leases, while their children left the region to become doctors, bankers, oil speculators and politicians."

784 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 269; Jones, "Problems of Cotton Marketing."

785 Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 45.

786 Ibid., 106, also 97-98, 143; Harold M. Hyman, *Oleander Odyssey: The Kempners of Galveston, Texas, 1854-1980s* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 1990), 26-27.

787 Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 109, 122-23, 138, 142.

788 Markens, *The Hebrews in America*, 147. Emphasis ours.

789 *The Jewish Texans* (San Antonio: Univ. of Texas, 1974), 9-10; Stone, "West of Center," 128; Isaac Herbert Kempner, "My Memories of Father," *AJA* 19 (April 1967): 41, 57; Hyman, *Oleander Odyssey*, 4, 4 n. 2, 28-29, 114, 207-30; Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 106-7.

790 Hyman, *Oleander Odyssey*, 86.

791 Woodman, "The Decline of Cotton Factorage," 1225.

792 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 258-59, 135, 162; Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," 99. Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 2:76, also mentions a "modern variation of the triangular trade." See also Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism,* 128, who speaks of a Jewish "trans-Atlantic triangle."

793 Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 399; Marcus, *United States Jewry*, 2:63.

794 LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 108-10; ISJL, "Forrest City, Arkansas." A measure of the Jewish presence in Arkansas is the fact that there were at one time about five or six kosher hotels in Hot Springs. See "Sign of the Times," *Circa* 11, no. 2 (summer 2002): 7.

795 LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 45, 46, 110. Dr. Edward L. Ayers shows that from "emancipation" to the 1890s the prison population of whites stayed constant, while the Black prison population grew by 900 percent. Prisons were a prime source of cheap labor for industrialists and state governments, which operated the forced labor, or convict leasing, system as a continuation of slavery. See *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984), 179-181, 185-222; Matthew J. Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another: Convict Leasing in the American South, 1866–1928* (Columbia, SC: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1996); Martha A. Myers and James L. Massey, "Race, Labor, and Punishment in Postbellum Georgia," *Social Problems* 38, no. 2 (May 1991); Christopher R. Adamson, "Punishment after Slavery: Southern State Penal Systems, 1865-1890," *Social Problems* 30, no. 5 (June 1983): 555-569; Jennifer Roback, "Southern Labor Law in the Jim Crow Era: Exploitative or Competitive?" *University of Chicago Law Review* 51, no. 4 (autumn 1984): 1180-1186; Robert H. Zieger, *For Jobs and Freedom: Race and Labor in America Since 1865* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2007), 44ff. Fifty years *after* "emancipation" Georgian J.T. Holleman writes of the Blacks ("Does Cotton Oligarchy Grip South and Defy All Plans for Diversification and Relief?" *AC*, 27 Sept. 1914, p. B3, col. 6):

> They are bought and sold as they were before the war of 1860. They are traded in by court officers and owners of the big plantations in almost every county in the state. Their fines are so arranged that the big plantation owners can pay them and take them out of jail and get more value in services than they have paid in fines to the court officials.

This new Black slavery included the widespread practice of torture such as the earliest recorded use of "waterboarding" in Georgia around 1870, which "consisted of pouring a stream of water into the mouth of a convict stretched on his back; much of it got into the lungs and at best it produced a fit of choking." See Blake McKelvey, "Penal Slavery and Southern Reconstruction," *JNH* 20, no. 2 (April 1935): 175. For an example of Jewish use of prison labor, see Stone, "West of Center," 166 n. 99. According to Pulitzer Prize-winning author Douglas Blackmon:

> And the truth was that in most places in the South, there was almost no criminal activity, almost no arrests, except at a time when one of these large industrial interests or commercial interests needed labor. And when that was the case, local sheriffs would begin these aggressive roundups in which 20 or 30 or 40 or 50 men at a time would be essentially seized in a very short period—all charged with misdemeanor offenses such as vagrancy, speaking loudly in the company of white women, walking beside a railroad, selling their cotton or some other farm produce after dark, carrying a concealed weapon. (The first gun control laws were actually passed in the South specifically to disarm Black men.) [There were a] whole range of these offenses of these statutes which had been passed by the Southern legislatures primarily to criminalize Black life and make it possible for sheriffs and then eventually just thugs [to] work [the] back roads of the South seizing men for no reason at all but to create a basis for these kangaroo convictions, after which they could be sold into these commercial interests.

See Douglas Blackmon, "Slavery by Another Name," interview by Tom Ashbrook, *On Point*, June 3, 2009, http//www.onpointradio.org; Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009). As late as the 1960s places throughout the South, like the Alabama Industrial School for Negro Children (AIS) in Montgomery, were enslaving Black children for lengthy terms as plantation laborers. Hubert R. Silas, interview by NOI, Boston, Mass., 1984.

796 Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 83, 84.

797 Bush, *An American Harvest*, 97 and passim. See Henry Marks and Marsha Kass Marks, "Jewish Life in Alabama: The Formative Stages," *Alabama Heritage,* Spring 1995, 22, for photograph of cotton shipment of the Moses Bros.

798 "Cultural Corridor Tour 1: Jackson to New Orleans," Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 1999, http://www.msje.org/html/tour_1.html; *Cultural Corridors: Discovering Jewish Heritage Along the Mississippi River* (Jackson, MS: Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 1998); Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 137 n. 14.

799 Bruchey, *Cotton and the Growth of the American Economy*, Table

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800 Ashkenazi, “Creoles of Jerusalem,” 22-23, 257.

801 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 325; Brock, *Jewish Community of Shreveport*, 29, 61; Athearn, *In Search of Canaan*, 108.

802 W.E. Myers, *The Israelites of Louisiana* (New Orleans: W.E. Myers, 1905), 35.

803 Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews*, 121; Bennett H. Wall, “Leon Godchaux and the Godchaux Business Enterprises,” *AJHQ* 66, no. 1 (Sept. 1976): 52-53, 61-62, 62 n. 18; Bloch, “Mercy on Rude Streams,” 99.

804 “Nominations for Sale,” *NYT,* 29 Sept. 1884, 5. Also, Mayer is mentioned in “Louisiana’s Congressmen,” *NYT,* 28 Aug. 1884, 2. The Lisso brothers, Jewish merchants of Coushatta, Louisiana, “fought willingly” for the Confederacy, depended on the trade with Black sharecroppers, and used the income from that trade to become the principal financiers and “the nucleus” of the main political faction in the region. See Ted Tunnell, *Edge of the Sword: The Ordeal of Carpetbagger Marshall H. Twitchell in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2001), 155-58.

805 *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 15:487-89.

806 LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 17.

807 Ashkenazi, “Creoles of Jerusalem,” 45-46; Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed,* 366.

808 See Wall, “Leon Godchaux,” 59ff.

809 Ashkenazi, “Creoles of Jerusalem,” 53; Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 365.

810 Wall, “Leon Godchaux,” 61-62; “The Godchaux Plantation Railroads,” Godchaux-Reserve House Historical Society, http://www.stjohnparish.com/grh/rails.htm.

811 Myers, *The Israelites of Louisiana*, 36.

812 See Wall, “Leon Godchaux,” 64, 66.

Hiding Their Light Under a Cotton Bale: Notable Jewish Cotton Merchants

In fact, the cotton-plantations in many parts of the South were wholly in the hands of the Jews, and as a consequence slavery found its advocates among them.

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Jewish Encyclopedia
(1901)

All of the aforementioned Jewish businessmen deserve a more focused examination of their business affairs—commercial activities that supported the Jim Crow system. In this section we will analyze the operations of some outstanding Jewish merchants doing business in the Black Belt of the American South.

Emmanuel & Mayer Lehman

THE LEHMAN BROTHERS • The recently collapsed investment-banking powerhouse, the giant New York-based Lehman Brothers, began as a tiny general store in the middle of the Black Belt of the deep plantation South. Twenty-three-year-old German immigrant Henry Lehman opened his store in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1844, directly opposite the town's main slave-trading auction block. Within six years his two brothers Emanuel and Mayer had joined him, and they named their business Lehman Brothers.[813]

These Jewish entrepreneurs purchased an African human being for $900 and by 1850 had enslaved others. Montgomery records show that the Lehman Brothers "owned" three Africans in 1852, and in 1854 they purchased a 14-year-old girl named "Martha." Two more Africans were purchased in 1858, three in 1859. The U.S. Census of 1860 lists Mayer Lehman as the "owner" of seven slaves—three males and four females—ranging in age from five to fifty.[814]

At first the Lehman Brothers began accepting slave-picked cotton from customers as payment for merchandise, and within a short time they had become "major buyers." Their dealings were so extensive that they even established a banking operation in Montgomery taking crop liens on the area's cotton farms.[815]

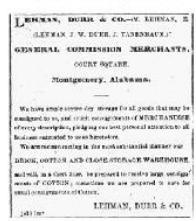
By 1858, they had become financially strong enough to move into cotton brokering and financing, opening an office in New York, where the major trading houses were based. They teamed with merchant John Durr to form Lehman, Durr & Co., and in 1863 they were advertising their new higher prices for storing, shipping, delivering and weighing cotton. Business for the Lehmans in Alabama prospered until the outbreak of the Civil War, when

the staunchly pro-Confederate brothers were said to be worth over $100,000 (today's value: $2,770,000).

Mayer Lehman avoided conscription into the army, though both he and his New York-based brother Emanuel served the Confederate cause by arranging financing for the rebel army using slave-grown cotton as security to attract foreign loans. In 1864, Alabama's governor trusted Mayer Lehman enough to put him *in charge of managing the state's cotton crop*—the chief product of most Alabama plantations.[816]

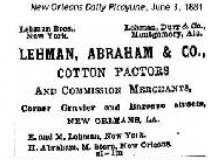
The Cotton Dealing of the Lehman Brothers

New-Orleans Times, April 10, 1867



New Orleans Times, June 16, 1865

New Orleans Daily Picayune, June 3, 1881



New Orleans Daily Picayune, September 7, 1861

And with the Union targeting the crop for destruction, its value soared. Wily merchants, many of them Jewish, anticipated the increase in value and hoarded the crop, expecting huge profits after the hostilities ended. Historian Joseph Wechsberg wrote that Emanuel Lehman

> could buy cotton in the South cheaply and sell it in Germany at ten times the price. It may not have been very patriotic; it may even have involved him

> in some smuggling. But what about the earlier activities of the Barings and Rothschilds during the Continental blockade?[817]

Mayer Lehman partnered with other Jewish merchants, bought the largest warehouse available, and ultimately reaped great rewards.[818]

Following the war, the Jewish firm helped finance Alabama's reconstruction, even while helping to found the New York Cotton Exchange in 1870. It partnered with Benjamin Newgass and Henry Abraham, and with a capital investment of $550,000 formed the firm of Lehman, Newgass & Co. It would later be called Lehman, Abraham & Co., concentrating—again—on the cotton market. Newgass was based in New Orleans, which handled one-third of all cotton shipped from American ports, "much of it going through Benjamin's hands."[819]

Lehman, Abraham & Co. did much business with other Jewish merchants. Abraham Levy of Bayou Sara did an extensive business with the Lehman firm. Henry Gerson of Monroe, Louisiana, sold $15,000 worth of cotton to Lehman in 1871. In June 1872, the Lehmans owned three cotton warehouses and held a 37 percent interest in the Commercial Cotton Press, in which Henry Abraham's brother-in-law Ferdinand Goldsmith was a principal. They also owned property in Texas and two cotton mills. Henry Abraham's $50,000 investment had risen in value to $225,000; by mid-1875 the Lehmans' investment in just the New Orleans market came to more than $500,000.

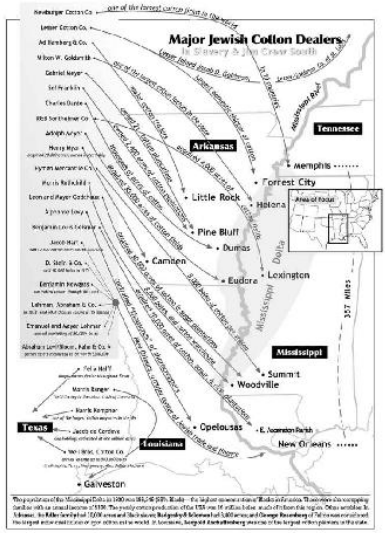
In 1874, the firm sold over 10,000 bales for D. Stein & Co., of the 80,315 bales it received that year. Jacob Schwarz opened a dry goods and clothing store with Mayer Lehman that served small

cotton growers. In fact, the Lehmans acquired a number of country stores in Mississippi and Louisiana to act as retail outlets. Ferdinand Goldsmith sold 316 bales of cotton to Lehman in 1875. The Lehmans immediately sold them to their English agent, Newgass, Rosenheim & Co.[820]

In 1878, the firm handled 69,410 bales with a market value close to $5,000,000—much, if not most, obtained through their dealings with other Jewish traders. Almost 30 percent of the 15,647 bales that reached Lehman, Abraham & Co. by boat along the Mississippi came from Jewish merchants. In the Monroe area, about two-thirds of all cotton shipped to Lehman, Abraham & Co. came from Jewish merchants.

The inter-Jewish cotton connection was buzzing with activity and generating spectacular profits. Ferdinand Goldsmith invested $20,000 in a cotton factory controlled by the Lehmans. In 1877—the same year that ended Reconstruction and the promise of Black freedom in America—the Lehman firm's annual net profits were in the $100,000 range (today's value: $2.1 million). Emanuel and Mayer Lehman made over $50,000 in profit from the New Orleans firm, plus $45,000 interest on their $569,000 investment with Lehman, Abraham & Co.[821]

Lehman and Maurice Stern incorporated in 1892, capitalized with $300,000 (today's value: $7.3 million), the company's stated purpose being "the purchase and sale of agricultural products of all kinds," as well as buying and selling plantations.[822]



The Lehmans also dealt in the emerging market for railroad bonds, and entered the financial advisory business. Soon the Lehmans were a founding financier of emerging retailers, including Sears, Roebuck, Woolworth's, Gimbels, and Macy's. They also helped finance the movie studios RKO, Paramount, and 20th Century Fox. Mayer Lehman's son Herbert (1878–1963) ultimately became governor and the U.S. senator from the State of New York.[823] All of these accomplishments were the direct result of the unpaid labor of African cotton growers and pickers during plantation slavery and in the Jim Crow South.[824]

JACOB LEMANN • A closer view of Jewish businessman Jacob Lemann (who is unrelated to the Lehman brothers) provides an intimate glimpse into a key component of the Jewish business network. In fact, according to Elliott Ashkenazi, who studied the family's history, the story of the Lemanns "is one of the outstanding success stories in the *best tradition* of Jewish immigrants to the American South."[825]

Jacob Lemann was well established in business before the Civil War, starting as a peddler hawking his wares to Southern plantations. In 1846, he placed an ad in a local newspaper offering to sell, among a wide array of other items, “negro clothes and shoes,” a line in which he did a “substantial business.” Eventually, he formed a partnership with another Jew in Donaldsonville, Louisiana, and established “the largest commercial house in town.” Just as quickly, Lemann mastered regional trade in Louisiana sugar country, generating enough wealth to buy homes in New York City and Newport, Rhode Island.[826]

According to Ashkenazi, Jacob Lemann reacted to the Civil War “by simply avoiding it.” He joined neither side, seeking only to protect his investments in Southern plantations, which included loans and mortgages he held on the property of Confederate soldiers. The way Lemann worked his mortgage business provides insight into how profits were generated from these kinds of transactions. He made the loans, it seems, with the apparent hope that the highly collateralized borrowers would not be able to repay him.[827] Gentile slave owner Valery Landry had no other source of funding when he borrowed $18,000 from Lemann in 1861. Landry secured the loan with a mortgage covering ten of his plantations, along with the Africans he enslaved —an extraordinarily high collateral given that just one of his plantations of 1,000 acres was valued at $65,000. After the war, Lemann went to court to foreclose on several sugar plantations formerly owned by soldiers who had fought and died in the war, a move that improved his own financial position enormously.[828]

Lehman Bros., New York. Lehman, Durr & Co., Montgomery, Ala.

LEHMAN, ABRAHAM & CO.,

COTTON FACTORS

AND COMMISSION MERCHANTS,

Corner Gravier and Baronne streets,
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

E. and M. Lehman, New York.
H. Abraham, M. Stern, New Orleans.
s1—1m

MEYER, WEIS & CO.,

COTTON FACTORS

AND COMMISSION MERCHANTS,

Nos. 186 and 188 Common st.,
NEW ORLEANS.

38 Exchange Place,
s1—1m NEW YORK.

BEN. GERSON & SON,

COTTON FACTORS

AND COMMISSION MERCHANTS

61 Carondelet street,

s1—1m NEW ORLEANS, LA.

Sam Hyman, Hart Lichtenstein, Jonas Hiller.

HYMAN, LICHTENSTEIN & CO.,

COTTON FACTORS

AND COMMISSION MERCHANTS,

No. 34 Perdido street,

s1—1m NEW ORLEANS, LA.

A defaulted mortgage is also how Lemann obtained the 325-acre plantation estate of Fernando Rodriguez. He paid a grand total of $459.05 to the

federal marshal for the whole property. In this way he also obtained the 250-acre Peytavin sugar plantation of the deceased Antoine Falcon—a $35,000 value obtained for just $6,000—with another Jew named Aaron Jacobs of New York taking a one-third interest. Lemann took the 440-acre Palo Alto cotton plantation from Pierre and Rosalie Ayraud, in payment for prewar debts amounting to about $27,000—the property was worth no less than $60,000. By the end of 1866, Jacob Lemann owned at least four plantations, "and knew that others would be available in foreclosure proceedings."[829] In 1867, Lemann foreclosed on another Confederate war casualty, the owner of the 150-acre Boucherau plantation, obtaining it for no money at all.[830] Once he acquired these properties, Lemann found ready investors within the Jewish community of New York.[831]

Lemann and his son Bernard teamed up with two absentee sugar barons, the Jewish Jacobs brothers, Aaron and Jonas, and acquired a string of large sugar plantations.[832] According to Ashkenazi, "Jewish plantation owners…brought a decidedly commercial approach to plantation management."[833] In 1869 just one of Mr. Lemann's plantations generated a profit of $17,621 (today's value: $316,000). This compares favorably with the Black sharecropper family's average *annual income* of $150 (today's value: $2,690). For other ventures Lemann partnered with many other Jews. In fact, the majority of Bernard's suppliers were Jews: D. Blum, Stern & Co., Ferdinand Goldsmith, Frank & Co., Levi, Miller & Co., Joseph Lum, and S. Meyer & Co., among others.[834]

Lemann's activities in the center of the Jim Crow South posed no moral problem for him as a Jew. His Catholic wife even converted to Judaism

to reinforce their commitment to his Judaic foundations.[835]

EMANUEL MEYER • Another Jewish cotton operator collecting bales from the small Black farmers of the Delta countryside was Emanuel Meyer. The Meyer family emigrated from the same Alsace region whence so many Jewish merchants came, to operate in the poverty-stricken Black Belt.[836]

Emanuel Meyer teamed with a New Orleans Jew named Abraham Levi, set up a country store, and in one year bought 263 bales dealing with 50 separate farmers, "*acquir[ing] control over their cotton crops*."[837] In one representative sale in 1863, Meyer bought 131 bales for prices ranging between 13¢-18¢ per pound, spending over $9,000. He sold it to yet another Jewish firm in New Orleans, Kahn & Adler.[838]

From his general store, Meyer operated a credit scheme that forced the area's Black plantation laborers to buy merchandise from him alone. He arranged for a white planter to pay the wages of the "free" workers with *scrips,* a type of coupon redeemable only at Meyer's store. Other growers picked up cash from Meyer and distributed it to the field workers, but "the distributed cash then returned to Meyer's store when the laborers bought merchandise there." In at least one other case Meyer paid the workers' "wages" in meat—*not money*—just as in slavery, charging the expense against the grower's coming cotton crop.[839] He wrote to Abraham Levi: "this is a back breaking business….We need not tell you, how hard work it is…"[840]

Thus, Meyer's experience in the Deep South is far from the popular image of the Jew as a poor anxious immigrant tentatively eking out a living in the midst of an enemy on the verge of a pogrom.

Meyer himself "had enough nerve" to raise money from his customers for a Jewish charity by simply charging his customers' accounts. A letter accompanying the appeal is revealing in its tone. He wrote to the Gentile hardware firm of Slocomb, Baldwin & Co. in New Orleans, sending five tickets and audaciously asserting that

> The Hebrews of this Place, who by the way are all your customers, have gotten up the Enterprise for a benevolent purpose & hereby claim your assistance.

Scholar Elliott Ashkenazi understated the extent of the Jewish business system's clout when he wrote that "Meyer was writing of a cohesive group with some economic power."[841]

ABRAHAM LEVI • New Orleans cotton dealer Abraham Levi was worth nearly $100,000 by 1854—a decade before the end of slavery. Part of his wealth was in a $10,000 mortgage on a cotton plantation, where Africans were enslaved. He and another Jew named Micajah Harris bought real estate and a plantation-supply business, with Levi investing $75,000.

In 1859, Levi joined with Samuel Kahn in yet another venture. Levi bought out Harris to make room for his future son-in-law, a Jew named Edward Newman, and concentrated on cotton factoring and on loans to cotton planters. Levi's assets at the outbreak of the Civil War, in the very heart of plantation slavery, were estimated to be $300,000.

A Gentile planter named James Bogan gave Levi a mortgage on his 746-acre plantation *and* the Africans he enslaved. Levi's firm took the mortgage that included the Africans to secure a loan of

$7,000. The firm probably foreclosed on the 324-acre plantation of Edward Sewell as well. Levi made numerous loans to planters during 1860, and according to Ashkenazi, "cotton planters came to Levi…just as the sugar planters came to Lemann..."

Levi contributed funds to the Confederacy, and throughout the war he speculated in cotton through the firm of Bloom, Kahn & Co. Documents describe cotton deals for extraordinary quantities with other Jews such as the New Orleans shoe manufacturer Julius Keiffer. Levi sold nearly 1,500 cotton bales for Emanuel Meyer between 1868 and 1872. As Levi's wealth grew he financed other Jewish country storekeepers.[842]

All these business dealings were not without conflict when it came to divvying up the Jewish profits. Goldsmith, Haber & Co. sued the Levy brothers in 1858 for $27,900. The Levys (Henry and Gabriel) had to surrender to Goldsmith, Haber the two Africans they held worth $1,200. A few days later Gabriel Levy leased one of the parcels of land and the store—just transferred to Goldsmith, Haber & Co.—"and the two slaves as well."[843]

JACOB ELSAS & FAMILY • The processing or milling of cotton was also becoming the domain of Southern Jews. Amongst southern textile workers, it was reported, the common grumble was that "Too many Jews own cotton mills."[844] One of these was Jacob Elsas, who had developed a huge complex of mills, warehouses, and other industrial facilities in and around Atlanta. He had come to America from Alsace, where his family had been weavers and dyers of cotton goods since the eighteenth century.[845] In fact, Elsas is the Americanized version of that region's name. And even as an eighteen-year-old Jewish immigrant, he found no obstacle to his advancement. He got an ex-slave, Mose White,

to build him a log cabin, where he started his retail business. He soon dumped Mr. White and partnered with other Jews in his expanding business ventures. White ended up working in one of Elsas's factories, while his boss became an industrial mogul. By the early years of the twentieth century, ownership was passed to his son Oscar, who grew it into an interstate business with plants in Dallas and New York.[846]

Elsas's biography is noteworthy not only because Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill became Atlanta's largest employer with over 1,500 workers,[847] but also because his exploitation of low-wage white workers caused a bitter 1914 strike that exposed the ugly side of post–Civil War industrialization. Elsas's workers lived in substandard and overcrowded company housing and were "plagued by debilitating diseases such as pellagra and tuberculosis."[848] He used child labor, worked his employees long hours, and subjected the young girls to sexual exploitation. According to historian Gary M. Fink, Elsas considered his employees shiftless, dishonest, and immoral. And, says another, he "played black workers against white workers, threatening to replace whites with blacks whenever the owners wished to cut wages or prevent unionization."[849] His policies led to an astounding employee turnover rate of over 800 percent, which was many times the industry average.[850]

Jacob Elsas's racist manipulation of the work force was at that time a typical management scheme employed by American industry. In 1897, he attempted to hire twenty Black women—not to make his mark as an early pioneer of civil rights, but to force them to accept even lower wages than he paid white females. But the white women

walked out, and the remainder of the work force quickly joined them. Elsas fired the Black women and rehired all of the striking employees.[851]

When workers finally went on strike for better conditions, Oscar Elsas called the strikers "anti-Semites"[852] and threatened to mow them down with machine guns. His own private police force, which included a network of informants and spies, electronically bugged the union's headquarters. Despite his methods Elsas ultimately beat down the strike and returned his company to profitability. Despite this momentary crisis, Jacob Elsas retired "with a cool $10,000,000 to his credit." That's "a cool" $244 million in today's money.[853]

The mind-boggling array of freewheeling, open-market transactions shows that these Jewish businessmen were operating without any restrictions or controls and without any fears or threats on their livelihoods. They were barred from no markets and simply created others where they did not previously exist. All of these magnates were members of the insular and rarefied network of Jewish businesses that stretched all the way to the Northern financial centers and to the Jewish banking houses in Europe.

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813 Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews,* 127-32. See Libo and Howe, *We Lived There Too*, 140, 141; and "Lehman Brothers: Who We Are," Lehman Brothers Inc., 2007, http://www.lehman.com/who/history/index.htm.

814 Flade, *The Lehmans,* 62. Other sources confirm that they had "two slaves in 1860, four slaves in 1861 and five slaves in 1864." Lehman Brothers acknowledges that "in all likelihood," the firm "profited significantly" from slavery. See Fran Spielman, "Company Admits Slave History," *Chicago Sun Times*, Sept. 13, 2005, http://www.suntimes.com/output/news/cst-nws-slave13.html; Fran Spielman, "Lehman Takes a Hit Over Ties to Slavery," *Chicago Sun Times*, Oct. 2, 2005, http://www.suntimes.com/output/news/cst-nws-slave02.html; "Lehman Bros.: 1 Brother Owned 7 Slaves in 1860," *USA Today*, Feb. 21, 2002, http://www.usatoday.com/money/general/2002/02/21/slave-lehman-bros.htm. Despite an

array of verifiable facts—complete with invoices, bills of sale, receipts, letters, deeds, court records, tax records, and personal testimony—the Lehman Brothers' general counsel, Joe Polizzotto, "claimed that company research had, so far, produced no concrete information that founding brothers Mayer, Henry and Emanuel Lehman had profited from slavery." The firm collapsed in 2008.

815 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 219, 216, 215; Flade, *The Lehmans*, 55-59; Joseph Wechsberg, *The Merchant Bankers* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966), 297.

816 Evans, *The Provincials*, 62-63; Wechsberg, *The Merchant Bankers*, 298; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 215-17; Flade, *The Lehmans*, 60, 62-65. Mayer's eighth child was named in honor of a Confederate congressman he admired. See Evans, *The Provincials*, 63.

817 Wechsberg, *The Merchant Bankers*, 298.

818 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 217. Judah P. Benjamin, for instance, a large slaveholder and the secretary of state of the Confederacy, stored 700 bales of cotton. When he escaped to England he was able to smuggle 100 of those bales into London, giving him and his family enough to start a whole new life. See Pierce Butler, *Judah P. Benjamin* (1907; reprint, New York: Chelsea House, 1980), 376-77. Union troops captured Columbus, Georgia, "in the process destroying most of Lazarus Straus's warehoused cotton." See Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 67 n. 31. White cotton growers were described as "making oceans of money" and seeing "dazzling" profits from the trade. See Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution* (New York, 1956), 408-9; Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews,* 84, table 3.2. The India-based Sassoon family used the blockade to bolster their trade in India-grown cotton, from which they realized fortunes in "great extreme." Bermant, *The Cousinhood*, 225.

819 Flade, *The Lehmans*, 68, 74; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 217-18. See also Ashkenazi, "Jewish Commercial Interests," 203-5.

820 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 220-22, 238.

821 Ibid., 217-24. Also, Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 3:38-39.

822 See the articles of incorporation for "Lehman, Stern & Co., Limited," in *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, 19 Sept. 1892, 7.

823 Evans, *The Provincials*, 63; "Lehman Brothers: Who We Are: 1900-1909." Mayer Lehman's obituary appeared in the *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, 22 June 1897, 3: "He was connected with a great many enterprises in the south in the way of cotton mills, iron works and railroads. His sympathies were ever with the south."

824 It is noteworthy that the Lehman Brothers' overinvestment in a massive mortgage-lending swindle aimed at "minorities" was blamed for its 2008 failure. The firm started in the 1840s operating the very same type of credit scheme fleecing cotton farmers in Alabama. See the section herein titled "The Sharecropper & the Crop Lien: The Moneylender on the Roof."

825 Emphasis ours. Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 43. In both European and American records, the name appears variously as Lehmann, Lehman, Leaman, Leman, Lemann, Leeman, Leighman, Leemon, Leamon, Lemon, Laymon, Layman, Leiman, Leyman. See a

1909 photograph of the Lemann family posing with "their mammy" in Libo and Howe, *We Lived There Too*, 152.

826 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 45, 51, 57, 74, 84-85.

827 Ibid., 48, 65, 66. And on p. 46: "Lemann's indifference to the great issues of the American political and social scene repeated itself among the community of southern Jewish immigrants."

828 Ibid., 63-65, 67, 70. One reason the government could not fulfill its promise of "40 acres and a mule" to the freed slaves was that much of this Southern land was mortgaged to merchants like Lemann. At war's end the government preferred to honor the "land rights" of these Confederate mortgagors and Northern absentee landlords, rather than the rights of those newly freed Blacks who for generations had actually worked the land whites had taken by force and by fraud from the Indians.

829 Ibid., 71-72, 76, 79-80.

830 Ibid., 72-73. Page 280 n. 46: "In December 1870 Jacob Lemann sold this plantation for $22,000… having acquired it with a loan of $10,300."

831 Ibid., 75-76, 79, 95, 97.

832 Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews*, 47-50.

833 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 80, 77, 268. See also Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 1:173: "[W]e may venture to guess that the percentage of Jewish planters would probably compare favorably with that of the non-Jews."

834 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 80, 98, 102.

835 Ibid., 46.

836 Ibid., 121, 123, 111. See also the *NYT* article (8 Sept. 1884, 1) about an Adolph Meyer, who the *Times* describes as "a Jew cotton merchant of great wealth, who is reported to have offered a large sum of money," which he allegedly used for political bribery.

837 Emphasis ours. Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 136, 124.

838 Ibid., 114, 302, appendix 3.

839 Ibid., 162-63.

840 Ibid., 138.

841 Ibid., 164. Similarly, when the mayor of Pompano, Florida, wrote bluntly that "Jews are not wanted" there, an irate peddler declared that "as long as Pompano Beach will not want Jewish merchants, I guarantee you that Pompano Beach is going to be worse than a cemetery." See Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 16. After the residents of Thomasville, Georgia, blamed Jews for the worsening wartime economy in 1862, Jews deserted the town, demonstrating that they had the power and the inclination to act in unison against offensive behavior—Black slavery apparently never qualified. Louis Schmier, "An Act Unbecoming: Anti-Semitic Uprising in Thomas County, Georgia," *Civil War Times Illustrated* 23 (Oct. 1984): 25. The Jewish citizens of Charleston, South Carolina, apparently felt secure enough when they "criticized the governor for alluding to Jesus Christ…" See Robert Rockaway and Arnon Gutfeld, "Demonic Images of the Jew in the Nineteenth Century United States," *AJH* 89, no. 4 (Dec. 2001): 370. Atlanta's Jews were economically and politically strong enough in the 1870s to "insist that the Bible not be read in school." See

Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 164.

842 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 126-33, 164.

843 Ibid., 181-82.

844 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 139; Jacquelyn Dowd Hall et al., *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1987), 30-32. See for example Frank Goldberg's six factories, in ISJL, "Gastonia, North Carolina."

845 "Jacob Elsas, Manufacturer, Philanthropist, Passes Away," *AC,* 6 March 1932, 1A.

846 Clifford M. Kuhn, "'A Full History of the Strike as I Saw It': Atlanta's Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Workers and Their Representations Through the 1914-1915 Strike" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1993), 4, 8-9, 115 n. 43; Gary M. Fink, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike of 1914–1915: Espionage, Labor Conflict, and New South Industrial Relations,* Cornell Studies in Industrial and Labor Relations, no. 28 (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, 1993), 8, 16-17.

847 Fink, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike*, 20.

848 Ibid., 29. Labor investigators used the terms "squalid," "miserable," "ramshackle," and "deplorable" to describe the condition of housing provided by Elsas. See "Industrial Commission Hears Plain Talk From Labor Men," *AC*, 21 March 1900, 7.

849 Gregory Mixon, *The Atlanta Riot: Race, Class, and Violence in a New South City* (Gainsville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2005), 33-34; Fink, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike*, 28.

850 Fink, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike*, 7, 36, 92, 38, 39. Also, Kuhn, "'A Full History of the Strike,'" 115.

851 Fink, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike*, 40.

852 Ibid., 28, 86, 146 (photograph of Fulton facility on p. 12); Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl'," 122.

853 Fink, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike,* 146, 86, 3*,* 42, 91, 92, 88; Mark K. Bauman, "Factionalism and Ethnic Politics in Atlanta: German Jews from the Civil War through the Progressive Era," in *Politics and Religion in the White South*, ed. Glenn Feldman (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2005), 40, 46-47.

The Sway of Cotton Business

[Jews are] the backbone of Southern commerce, and as necessary to it as steam or iron.

—

Jewish writer, *American Israelite*, 1875

The prodigious presence of Jews in the cotton business is one of the hidden stories of the Black–Jewish relationship in America. Most Americans—whites, Jews, and Blacks—would be shocked to learn that Jews had any presence at all in the South, much less that they had anything to do with the cotton plantation, the very emblem of slavery and Jim Crow. But once the cotton was picked and baled, a heretofore shadowy business elite collected, processed, and marketed the valuable harvest, making the whole enterprise extremely profitable.

Cotton merchants as a rule were intimately involved with plantation operations. Often they financed the crop in advance, and thus bought the product even before it was planted. Once invested, they became the party most interested in ensuring that Africans efficiently labor in the cotton fields. Cotton merchants were slavery's intimate operatives who created the market demand for Black labor,

thus perpetuating the Black Holocaust. They were also the ones most interested in ensuring that post-emancipation sharecropping mirror the plantation system as closely as possible. It was these merchants who commissioned the huge steam barges to move their cotton up and down the Mississippi River. Cotton was indeed the magnet for many Jewish immigrants and within a remarkably short time many had reached the status of millionaire. Here is a list of just a few of the many Jews who built their fortunes on the labor of Black men, women, and children:

Cradled in Cotton: Jews in the Cotton Business

If there is one indisputable, incontrovertible, irrefutable fact in the history of America, it is that Blacks picked cotton. It is the American commodity that is most associated with the crime of Black African slavery, as fully one-half of the South's African slaves at the time of the Civil War were employed in its production. And by political, social, and economic design Blacks continued unchanged in this role long after slavery's legal end.

Year	Description
Alabama (a)	
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible] investments and cotton-brokering
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible] w. brothers in Huntsville, Tuscaloosa
[illegible]	[illegible], slave owners; recently collapsed (see Louisiana entry)
[illegible]	[illegible] the first cotton gin in Alabama
[illegible]	[illegible] owner
[illegible]	[illegible] cotton Co.; expanded to several cities; annual volume 500,000 bales (yearly production of the U.S.: 10 million bales)
[illegible]	[illegible] with sons that "was particularly dominant in its area"
[illegible]	[illegible] [ed] over a large territory in Alabama"
[illegible]	[illegible] hosiery mills, employed hundreds
Arkansas	
[illegible]	[illegible] owner; he and bro.-in-law Jacob Solomon owned 3,400 acres; said to have "owned" the town
[illegible]	[illegible] owner; partner of Adolph Radgesky
[illegible]	[illegible] (1884); plantation was "principal business of the area"
[illegible]	[illegible] of Samuel
[illegible]	[illegible] acres, farmed cotton, established a gin
[illegible]	[illegible] and cotton trader
[illegible]	[illegible], banker, and cotton broker
[illegible]	[illegible] Cotton Company
[illegible]	[illegible] largest cotton ginning businesses in area
[illegible]	[illegible] ginning business and land holdings
[illegible]	[illegible] Camden merchant

owned 20,000 acres of cotton and timber land; built a steamship in 1896

[David] began investing in land and slaves"; shipped 700 bales in 1859; smuggled cotton and cattle into Memphis

cotton gin in Cardwell, Missouri; son was cotton buyer at Paragould

formed a cotton buying and ginning partnership with William Lephiew

established a ginning company; acquired thousands of acres of farmland

Meyer, Son & Company (merchants); acquired 30,000 acres

Forrest City Gin Co.

dealer in area; moved to St. Louis and formed Lesser-Goldman Cotton Co., "the largest domestic shippers of cotton in the nation"

Lesser-Goldman Co.; Lesser-Goldman Cotton Co.; opened the $300,000 Goldman Hotel complex in 1911; town of Goldman was named for Jacob

Silvey Sternberg, of Blytheville; dealt in poultry and cotton

of the richest men in state; said to have been "the largest individual holder of spot cotton in the world."

of the largest cotton factors in the state; bank director

Cotton Company; known as one of the "best authorities on cotton in Eastern Arkansas"

Cotton Co.; extensive farm lands

the "kingpin" of cotton trade in Helena area

and set up a cotton gin

holder and director of several banks

& Co.; associates of Lesser Goldman Co.; sold livestock, horses before cotton brkrg.

respected cotton expert and was involved in the state's purchase of a penal farm

cotton oil companies; pres. of Chamber of Comm.; served as pres. of Union National Bank

cotton business in 1890

associated w. Eagle Ginning & Cotton Co.; handled 4,000-6,000 bales annually; pub. office holder

grocery store

owner

Lee also went into the cotton business and later opened a department store

Adolph Hirsch, whose firm A. Hirsch & Co. did an "immense" business and was "instrumental" in extensive land development in Marvell area

Michael Hirsch — extensive farm interests in area; "instrumental in agricultural growth of Phillips County for 50 years"

William "Bill" Hemingway — horses, bought land, dealt in cotton, and built a gin

Solomon Lowenberg — 7,500 acres of plantations, 3 cotton gins, dry goods business

Isaac Lowenberg — cotton brokerage and industrial tugboats on the White River

Jack, Joe, and Phillip all had stores

A.D. and Saul had 13 cotton gins and 7,000 acres; A.D. was pres. of First Natl. Bank, Board of Trade

Joseph, Wolf — large firm, farms, cotton gin

dealer, had cotton gin; nephew of Simon L. Joseph

of Joe Steinberg of Corning

supplier and agent for the Lesser Goldman Cotton Co.

Altheimer — planter named for him and brother Joseph; "cleared more land for agricultural purposes than any man in Arkansas"

owned 3,200 acres of cotton land at one time; served three terms as mayor, from 1913 to 1919

Bluthenthal and Co., a large cotton factorage enterprise

Sol's brother; erected one of the first cotton oil mills in the South; was a leading area financier

the largest in the state, 2,400 acres; ran cotton barges on the Arkansas River

brokerage firm and a trucking company

owned 1,200 acres; dir. of Cotton Belt Trust Co.

owned 21 large cotton plantations; "father" of Pine Bluff school system

; founded cotton company; pres. of the Pine Bluff Cotton Exchange

amassed a great fortune" from land, general store, and cotton gin

cotton gins; mercantile store with branches in 2 nearby towns

Kosminsky

owner of general store, plantation, slaves; by early 1900s the Adlers had 10,000 acres in Ark.

slave dealer; supplied the "many flourishing cotton plantations" in SW Ark. (and poss. La.)

; invested in hundreds of acres of farm land; established Cross County Bank, its first pres.

the Merchants and Farmers' Cotton Gin Co.; supplied farmers and marketed their crops

Hyman Steinberg — pres. of Merchants and Farmers' Cotton Gin

Georgia

" plantation owner, cotton warehouse owner

[illegible] Bacon Bag and Cotton Mills; wealthiest man in Atlanta

[illegible] $4,000 (today's value: $86,600) at 22 y.o., owned "several" cotton plantations; bank director

[illegible] 47 Africans by 1860

[illegible] 18-year-old slave; migrated from Talbotton

[illegible] w. tools, cottonseed, slave clothing and food; marketed crops; regularly sold to Boston's Coffin & Weld

[illegible] commission merchants

[illegible] inated in cotton, other crops; bank director

[illegible] the Cotton Exchange; of the wholesale drug firm Solomons & Co.

[illegible] brothers Abraham and Joseph sold cotton and other supplies to the Confederate Army

Louisiana

[illegible] the largest cotton planters in that state"

[illegible] eminent cotton factor in Louisiana and Texas

[illegible] factors and warehouse selling cotton and coffee

[illegible] brokerage house

[illegible] located a cotton business

[illegible] sive business w. the Lehmans; made $225,000 on the $50,000 invested w. Lehman firm

[illegible] ged sale of cotton crop for farmers

[illegible] cotton from a local planter as agent for a speculator in New Orleans

[illegible] and sugar; owned 10,000 acres; post office, railroad station named after Geismar

[illegible] worth of cotton to Lehman in 1871

[illegible] igating canals, cotton gins, a cotton oil mill, a rice mill, and a syrup mill

[illegible] 1900s; "head of the famous cotton house of H. Abraham & Son (formerly Lehman, Abraham & Co.)"

[illegible] w. Rosenheim & Co. in Liverpool; joined his father's cotton firm H. Abraham & Son; mem. of New York Coffee and Cotton Exchange and New Orleans Sugar Exchange, in banking

[illegible] Beer & Co.

[illegible] made 42 separate purchases of cotton amounting to 696 bales, potentially worth over $100,000

[illegible] large" consignments of cotton to New York on a steady basis

[illegible] $20,000 in a cotton factory controlled by the Lehmans; principal in the Commercial Cotton Press

[illegible] l estate and a plantation-supply business, with Abraham Levi investing $75,000

[illegible] 13 slaves; owned cotton presses; warehouse contained 12,000 cotton bales worth $300,000

[illegible] with Emanuel Meyer and Abraham Levi

[illegible] 1878, sold 69,410 bales valued at $5 million

[illegible] Abraham & Co.

[illegible] Mayer Lehman of 80,000+ bales; large investor in other ventures

[illegible] (supplied with $300,000) to buy and sell plantations and agricultural products of all kinds

[illegible] of Atlanta & Co. cotton through the firm of Bloom, Kahn & Co.; supported Confederacy; acquired hundreds of acres of plantations; made loans to cotton planters; financed other Jewish merchants; assets estimated to be $300,000

[illegible] Gumbel, Simon, & Co.

[illegible] Leichtenstein & Sons; owned "some fine cotton plantations and had interests in several country banks"

[illegible] Leichtenstein

[illegible] Herd. Marks & Son Insurance Agcy.; with Lehmann, Abraham & Co. and then in cotton business for himself, a mem. of the Cotton Exchange

[illegible] of great wealth"; accused by New York Times of bribery

[illegible] originally from Natchez

[illegible] country store and in one year bought 263 bales, dealing with 50 separate farmers

[illegible] handled one-third of all cotton shipped from U.S., "much of it going through Benjamin's hands."

[illegible] of Lehman Bros.; invest. bankers

[illegible] to planters; partner w. Abraham Levi

[illegible] Abraham Levi's factoring business

[illegible] a dry goods and clothing store with Mayer Lehman serving small cotton farmers

[illegible] at least 10,000 bales in 1874

[illegible] supplier; banker

[illegible] produced" rice and cotton to "thousands" of sharecroppers

[illegible] cotton yard, compress

[illegible] owned "huge cotton yard" on waterfront

[illegible] stores, gins, mills, opera houses, saloons

Mississippi

[illegible] merchant; opened store at N. Little Rock, Ark.

[illegible] became a cotton grower with his wife, Mollie Bernstein Grundfest

[illegible] Supply Co.; innovated planting methods

[illegible] father of Southern writer David L. Cohn

[illegible] named for him; city councilman

[illegible] creditors

[illegible] 1200 acre plantation he named Sontheimer's Place

[illegible] over 15,000 acres farmed by hundreds of sharecropper families

[illegible] one of the largest supply stores in the state; Rosa, the state's first female millionaire, married Isidore Hyman; amassed nearly 4,000 acres

[illegible] bought "large amounts" from area farmers; his

business was an entire city block, known as the Baum Block

[illegible] 1800s to present; name from Dreyfus; sons H. Marshall, Katcher, Lewis, c. 1910, annual sales $100,000

[illegible] was in Cotton Square

[illegible] and Joseph Friedler

[illegible] Cadler in the city

[illegible] deal of land throughout the South; first Jewish mayor of Natchez (1882, reelected 1884)

[illegible] 500 acres and 11 Black slaves

[illegible]

[illegible] stations and stores in Gameta, Onward, Anguilla

[illegible], owned 400 farms worked by Black sharecroppers

[illegible] Hyman Mercantile Company; arrived in Summit in 1850; handled 8,000 + bales per season

[illegible]

[illegible] handled 8,000 bales/season; pres., Bank of Woodville; owned a dry goods store, cotton warehouse

[illegible], considered "large dealers"

[illegible] owners; owned more than 30,000 acres of prime farmland throughout the South

[illegible] largest dry goods store in the city; invested in local plantations

Missouri

[illegible] store and a gin; bought cotton in Corning, Ark.

[illegible] Fort Smith, Ark., entry

[illegible] founded Lesser Cotton Co., "one of the most successful cotton firms in the nation"

North Carolina

[illegible] crowned by the local newspaper as "the Building and Loan King of North Carolina"

[illegible] business

[illegible] Cone Mill Corporation,/ H. Cone & Sons,/ Cone Export and Commission Co./ Proximity Cotton Mills; made denim for Levi Strauss jeans

[illegible] the South's largest textile mill; "relied on child labor…and denial of unionization rights…"

[illegible] Cotton Mill; "helped to transform their sleepy town into an industrial center"; called "cotton king"

[illegible] grew tobacco, corn, and grapes

[illegible] Durham's Commonwealth Cotton Mills

[illegible] Wallace), purchased a local cotton mill

[illegible]; fdr. and pres. of Statesville Cotton Mill

South Carolina

[illegible], landowner

[illegible] Sea Islands of Savannah and Beaufort

[illegible]; Maguire Palmer plantations; largest landholders in Kershaw County

[illegible] Levy

[illegible] "the prosperous planter"

[illegible] Goldsmith Mercantile Co.

[illegible] Goldsmith

[illegible] bought his first textile mill in 1917, eventually owning at least 6 factories

[illegible] estate, stocks, bonds, slaves, cotton, flour, corn

[illegible] Bennett moved to Sumter; owned hundreds of acres

[illegible] Jackson Isaacs; owned 1000 acres

[illegible] Matthews

[illegible] Matthews

Tennessee

[illegible] mechanical picker

[illegible] "lots of property"; opened Kenton's first cotton gin

[illegible] Cotton Company

[illegible] founder of the Memphis Jewish community; banker; served as a city alderman in 1847-48

[illegible] Frank was largest steamer on Miss. River

[illegible] Bronauer

[illegible] president, Memphis Cotton Exchange; voted Cotton Man of the Year

[illegible] Bernstein & Bro.; director, Pioneer Cotton Mill

[illegible] Cotton Co., one of the largest operations in the world; in 10 countries

[illegible] M. Wolf

Texas

[illegible] owned over 1 million acres

[illegible] Brothers

[illegible] Kemp, of Dallas Cotton and Woolen Mills; a driving force behind locating the Fed. Res. branch to Dallas

[illegible] of largest cotton magnates in SW; investor in land, railroads; dir. in no less than 10 Tx. banks

[illegible] Marx and Harris Kempner supplied stores and purchased cotton from local growers

[illegible] brokered both cotton and coffee; invested in Cotton Exchange

[illegible] claimed he "held the key to the cotton trade of the world"

[illegible] boasted that he paid "the highest market price...for cotton"

[illegible] member of the Houston Cotton Exchange, Houston Board of Trade

[illegible] smuggled cotton out of the country to support Confederacy

[illegible], partnered w. William Moses, bought and exported cotton (750 bales once); related to Halff family that controlled over six million acres in West Texas

[illegible] 8,800 pounds of cotton to the Confederate Army

[illegible] 5 Blacks; owned 640 acres; est. Landa Mill; owned cotton gin; sons Harry and Isadore took over

[illegible] Waco Cotton Palace; daughter Gussie later ran it

[illegible] cotton, exported it and other Texas agricultural products internationally; imported sugar, coffee, cloth

Virginia

[illegible]; 200 employees; shipped internationally

(a) In 1863, the year of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, the Examiner newspaper alleged Jews had bought up two-thirds of Alabama's cotton and monopolized the mercantile business throughout the South.

(b) LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 255: "Some of the men who helped make Blytheville a center for buying and selling cotton were Adolph and Max Meyer, Lee Rosenberg, Silvey Sternberg and his son Harold, Milton Sternberg, and the Jiedel brothers, Siegbert "Zeke" (1902–1955) and Richard (a third brother, Jake Jiedel, settled at Helena)."

(c) As many as 40,000 bales of cotton were shipped yearly from Camden.

(d) During the 1850s cotton accounted for four-fifths of the value of all exports from Savannah, ranging from about 350,000 bales in the 1850s to over 500,000 bales by 1860.

(e) Jews held extraordinary power and owned two-thirds of all agricultural land in Opelousas.

(f) The *New Orleans Times* reported that one Jewish cotton firm in Shreveport received an astounding 125,000 bales every year.

(g) Many early members of the Greenville Jewish community came to own large farms.

(h) Jews also owned mills in nearby Roxboro and Burlington.

(i) In Texas, Jewish merchants invested in cotton compresses and banks, and in Calvert and Hearne they profited greatly as independent cotton buyers.

(j) In 1879, the Jewish firms of Heidenheimer Brothers, Marx and Kempner, Leon Blum, and M. Kopperl of Galveston invested in "the 'handsomest' Cotton Exchange in the United States."

Jewish merchants report on their cotton crop.
Daily Picayune (New Orleans), July 20, 1879.

THE CROPS.

Condition of Cotton and Corn in the States of Louisiana, Mississippi and Arkansas.

Correspondence of Merchants.

The following extracts, taken from the correspondence of some of the leading cotton factors of the city, will serve to give an idea of the present status of the cotton crop. It will be noticed that it is generally reported in good condition, with at least an average crop in prospect, but a universal complaint of an insufficient supply of rain is made. Owing to this latter fact, the corn crop is almost a complete failure. It will be observed that nowhere is the appearance of worms reported:

Louisiana.

Meyer, Weiss & Co.

MONROE, July 14.—Crops looking very well. I am well pleased with my crops.

BAYOU SARA, July 18.—Cotton crop needs rain badly. Some portions of the parish have not had a rain for six weeks. Unless we have it soon the crops may be seriously injured.

MONROE, July 18.—My crops in splendid condition. Will need one rain this month and one next. Crops in vicinity are in good condition, having had sufficient rains. Crops up and down the Ouachita suffering much for rain. Crops in Bayou Boeuf River are in good condition.

SHREVELAND, La., July 18.—The crop is growing finely and fast filling up with bolls. It promises well but needs rain.

Lehman, Abraham & Co.

OPELOUSAS, July 13.—Late spide in the spring have retarded cotton, and the drouth is beginning to injure the plants in many sections. Still the entire crop is considered good.

MONROE, July 13.—The crops of this neighborhood, if left alone by the worms, will fully equal that of last Year. The weed is rather small for this season, having suffered somewhat from the drouth, and the stand is not perfect.

OPELOUSAS, July 18.—Cotton prospects very good. The plant is fruiting remarkably thick.

SHREVEPORT, July 14.—Prospects for a large cotton crop favorable. If present weather continues picking will commence August 1st.

HARRISON, July 13.—Corn crop is nearly a failure. Should cotton, considering the long drouth, is looking well. Rain needed.

HARRISON, July 14.—Owing to drouth corn will be short, and while cotton is doing very well it needs rain.

Mississippi.

To Lehman, Abraham & Co.

SHIPPS CREEK, Miss., July 13.—Cotton is still small, but still growing along. Need rain.

CLINTON, July 18.—Corn crop injured materially for want of rain; cotton prospects very good. In many localities it is reported small, but much better formed than last year.

NATCHEZ, July 13.—If we do not get more rain the crop will fall short of last year.

FORT ADAMS, July 14.—Rain needed, particularly in the bottoms.

WOODVILLE, July 12.—Corn is lost for want of rain, and cotton has also suffered. Cotton in low lands looks well, but on the hills is small and fast maturing.

OKOLONA, Miss., July 16.—Corn is already burned up for want of rain, but cotton has not suffered; we look for an average crop.

SHOOKTAWN, July 16.—Rain needed. Cotton in fine condition, and some planters will begin picking in eighteen or twenty days.

Arkansas.

Lehman, Abraham & Co.

PORTER CITY, Ark., July 11.—Cotton crops in this and adjacent country very promising. We have never seen a more favorable prospect for a large yield.

Meyer, Weiss & Co.

PINE BLUFF, July 14.—Cotton in the bottoms looks fine but will soon need rain, while the hills are already suffering, and if they do not get rain here shortly will materially curtail the crop.

Miscellaneous.

To Lehman, Abraham & Co.

HEMPSTEAD, Texas, July 9.—Prospects for next crop have brightened since rains set in. A fair crop anticipated.

All About the Benjamins: The Ex-Slave Meets the Jewish Merchant

Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; in the morning he devours the prey, in the evening he divides the plunder.

—

Genesis
49:27

A steam barge loaded with cotton bales—grown, picked, baled, and

loaded by Black workers. Each bale represents one or more days of sun-up to sundown labor (at 43¢ a day) just to pick the cotton; many more days were needed to bring it to harvest.

We have now shown conclusively that Jews were firmly rooted in the plantation South and were major business operators, profiting mightily from the lucrative plantation economy they helped to create and maintain. We will now examine evidence of the *direct* relationship between Blacks and Jews in the post-emancipation South and the consequences of this association once "freedom for all" became the law of the land.

Blacks emerged from legalized enslavement still shackled by a resentful, rage-filled white America single-mindedly determined to keep them uneducated, apolitical, and confined to the cotton fields, just as they were before their so-called emancipation. Said one prophetic Black man:

> Our old masters will ever regard us as legal property stolen and forcibly taken away from them, and if they can't get our labor for nothing in one way, they will invent some other plan by which they can, for they make all the laws and own all the best lands.[854]

And no one understood this Black labor imperative better than Jewish businessmen, who established an even higher Southern profile after

the Civil War than they had before, picking up the economic reins relinquished by the old slavocracy. A remnant of their prewar commercial framework—though battered—was yet in place, and the valuable plantation land was still productive and widely available. Jewish wholesale merchants came, according to Dr. Clive Webb, "breathing air into this economic vacuum….ensur[ing] that the South's agricultural economy survived…"[855] Most important, the Black laboring population was still very much present and tied to the land, with the oppressive laws and "slave code" customs conspiring to fix them there forever. All the ingredients remained in the South for explosive economic growth, and Jews were favorably placed to seize the opportunity to widen the market for their products and services.[856]

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854 Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977; reprint, New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 67; Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009).

855 Clive Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations in the American South, 1790-1970" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Cambridge, 1997), 137; Eli N. Evans, *The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 69; Harold Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of Black-Jewish Relations Through 1900, Part 1" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1977), 331-32. According to Brackman, northern merchants "liberally sprinkled" with Jews "succeeded in quickly reestablishing disrupted patterns of trade between the sections." See Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s-1990s* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994), 98; also Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 1 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 216. The term "flooded" is used by Michael Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society: The Natchez District, 1860-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1983), 165. Robert Somers confirmed that much of the storekeeping business in Meridian, Mississippi, was conducted by German Jews who "make no secret of their little bill transactions on cotton liens at the rate of 40 percent [a year]." He said that they were "sent down by firms in New York…to advance money on cotton…at as much interest as they can extort." Robert Somers, *The Southern States Since the War, 1870-71* (1871; reprint, University, AL: Univ. of Alabama

Press, 1965), 151. And Jews had ably provided this economic revitalization service in Europe, having reestablished markets and stimulated native industries. See Berthold Altmann, “Jews and the Rise of Capitalism: Economic Theory and Practice in a Westphalian Community,” *Jewish Social Studies* 5 (1943): 185.

856 Mark I. Greenberg, “Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity in Nineteenth-Century America: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830-1880” (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Florida, 1997), 121.

The "Jew Store" in the Jim Crow South: Targeting the "Negro Market"

If a man sees that his evil desire is conquering him, let him go to a place where he is unknown, don black and cover himself with black, and do as his heart desires, but let him not publicly profane God's name.

—The Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 40a

The end of the Civil War saw an "invasion" of Jewish peddlers into the Deep South who, according to historian E. Merton Coulter, "secured…a great amount of the Negro's trade."[857] The specific and aggressive targeting of Blacks by Jewish merchants and peddlers as they emerged from the depths of chattel slavery is one of the most significant but wholly unexplored aspects of the Black–Jewish relationship.[858]

The four million or so Black "freedmen" were not just America's newest citizens, but a huge new consumer class who needed food, shelter, and clothing, just as they did when they were enslaved.

While white Gentile merchants were horrified by the sheer thought of a "free nigger" in their midst and often refused his patronage, the Jews clearly saw beyond the black skin to the greenbacks in the ex-slave's pockets.[859] After all, Jewish merchants had profited handsomely by supplying the needs of the slaves through direct dealings with the plantation master. "Emancipation" simply re-routed that same revenue stream through the hands of the ex-slaves in the form of wages. Business had moved from wholesaling to the shrewd and conservative plantation owner into retailing to the inexperienced and financially naïve ex-slave, who was willing to spend much more on himself and his family than his white master ever would. Jewish peddlers and shops offered the first and often the only market for these new Black consumers, some of whom were seeing and handling money for the first time in their lives.[860] Said one Mississippian in 1868:

> The negroes…keep a large amount of money in circulation in the country, and consume on a much larger scale than formerly, which makes the business of supplying them as lucrative, if not more so, than planting or renting.[861]

The forces of white supremacy were adamant in their opposition to the formation of an independent Black merchant class, and the savvy Jewish merchant, strategically positioned to exploit this valuable new group of consumers, quickly became the dominant commercial and financial entity in the lives of the new Black communities forming all across the South. Jewish historian Dr. Lee Shai Weissbach of the University of Louisville studied Jewish life in small-town America and found that

> the prospect of opening a store with very little capital was enhanced by the presence of a large African-American population that seemed to offer a ready customer base for Jewish entrepreneurs.[862]

More than any other single image, the country store became the symbol most emblematic of the post–Civil War "New South." Thomas D. Clark wrote, "The stores were as much a part of the southern tradition as were Lee and Jackson or as boll weevils and mammy songs."[863] Whole agriculture-based communities were built on the steady supply power of the Southern general merchandise store, and no community could exist without one. In South Carolina, for instance, there was an average of one store for every 25 farms in the state.[864] As they became the centers of commerce their role, according to Rhodes University professor Marcus Arkin, "was both qualitatively and quantitatively significant."[865] The proprietors of these stores were crucial factors in the fortunes and failures of entire regions, and of all the distinct cultural or racial groups, Jews took special interest in this commercial opportunity.

This should not be surprising to those familiar with the ancient blueprint of Jewish community development. Elliott Ashkenazi wrote: "The novelty of the American South was the chance to make *a lot more money from traditional Jewish occupations* concerned with storekeeping and general mercantile activity."[866] And as we continue to show, the Black ex-slave—whose labor drove *all* Southern development—became a special object of interest for this wave of Jewish peddlers and country store merchants.

These New South merchants brought a new predatory capitalism focused entirely on the vulnerable Black ex-slave—and the numbers are dramatic. The 1860 census listed 43,000 merchants of all ethnicities in the South. That number increased to 69,000 in 1870 and to 92,000 in 1880.[867]

This new set of commercial circumstances shifted completely the balance of power in the South from the planters of the old guard to the newcoming merchant. Through their aggressive trade with the new Black consumers, the merchants began to siphon from the planter the spoils of the plantation economy. In short order, the planter was forced to cede control of the money stream to the merchant, who quickly grew into great wealth and political importance. One scholar bluntly stated:

> No planter could hope to survive in the New South unless he became a shopkeeper himself or worked out a general accommodation with one of the local merchants. For the one who controlled credit stood a good chance of controlling the crop as well, not to mention controlling the tenant farmers who raised it.[868]

Donaldsonville, Louisiana, merchant Jacob Lemann (profiled earlier) was one of many who recognized this bonanza, concluding that Southern merchants "would do more business than before the War because of their new wage-earning customers." He wrote to his contacts in New York almost giddy over his fortunes: "Business is better than it was before. *All the negroes work and have money*, which they spend in Donaldsonville. There are about 30 stores in town."[869]

857 E. Merton Coulter, *The South During Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1947), 202. Frank Bohn also uses the term "invasion" to describe the influx of "Jewish retail merchants," in "The Ku Klux Klan Interpreted," *American Journal of Sociology* 30, no. 4 (Jan. 1925): 405.

858 Elliott Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem: Jewish Businessmen in Louisiana, 1840-1875" (Ph.D. diss., George Washington Univ., 1983), 2. According to Ashkenazi, most histories examining the Jewish presence in the Cotton South contain "little reference to relationships between the merchants and the society around them." Also, Eric L. Goldstein, "'Now Is the Time to Show Your True Colors': Southern Jews, Whiteness, and the Rise of Jim Crow," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History,* eds. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 144.

859 Golden says that Jews targeted Blacks and thus eliminated themselves as competition in Southern retailing. Harry Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer* (Cleveland: World, 1963), 41; Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg, eds., *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 9.

860 Andrew Waters, ed., *On Jordan's Stormy Banks: Personal Accounts of Slavery in Georgia* (Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 2000), 154, 169. Says Ashkenazi:

> The free black population of New Orleans was a significant economic group, and even urban slaves had funds at their disposal not available to their plantation counterparts.

See Elliott Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana, 1840-1875* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1988), 126. Also Kenneth Libo and Irving Howe, *We Lived There Too* (New York: St. Martins, 1984), 276-78.

861 Juliet E.K. Walker, *The History of Black Business in America: Capitalism, Race, Entrepreneurship* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), 160-61. Also, see Harold D. Woodman, *King Cotton and His Retainers: Financing and Marketing the Cotton Crop of the South, 1800–1925* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1968; reprint, Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1990), 310-11; Carl Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer* (Chicago, 1903), 60.

862 Lee Shai Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-Town America: A History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2005), 100.

863 Thomas D. Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows: The Southern Country Store* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1944), 22, 335. Roy G. Taylor, *Sharecroppers: The Way We Really Were* (Wilson, NC: J–Mark, 1984), 58: "The country store. It's as much a part of the community as the church house….Both are essential in serving the needs of the people." See also Grace Elizabeth Hale's interpretation, in her *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), 169, in which she says that "country stores masqueraded as indigenous," when, in fact, they were "the entry points into the region" for the flood of new mass-produced

items of every imaginable variety.

864 Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, "Debt Peonage in the Cotton South After the Civil War," *Journal of Economic History* 32, no. 3 (Sept. 1972): 653. Also Robert Higgs, *Competition and Coercion: Blacks in the American Economy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), 55. [Editors' note: Though his data are useful, Higgs's reliance on clearly white supremacist sources tends to undermine his conclusions. See Harold D. Woodman, "Sequel to Slavery: The New History Views the Postbellum South," *JSoHis* 43, no. 4 (Nov. 1977): passim, esp. 540 n. 41.] See also M.B. Hammond, "The Southern Farmer and the Cotton Question," *Political Science Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (Sept. 1897): 461; James L. Roark, "Country Store," *Encyclopedia of Southern History*, eds. David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1979), 304-5.

865 Marcus Arkin, *Aspects of Jewish Economic History* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1975), 224; Hale, *Making Whiteness*, 172; Edgar T. Thompson, "Country Stores," *New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture,* vol. 11 (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2006), 54-60.

866 Emphasis ours. Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 44.

867 Michael Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure: The Southern Farmers' Alliance and Cotton Tenancy, 1880-1890* (New York: Academic Press, 1976), 58. For Alabama numbers see Jonathan M. Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South: Alabama, 1860-1885* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1978), 112-15.

868 Lawrence N. Powell, *New Masters: Northern Planters During the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1980; reprint, New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 1998), 93; Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1974), 395; Harold D. Woodman, "The Decline of Cotton Factorage after the Civil War," *American Historical Review* 71, no. 4 (July 1966): 1236; Somers, *The Southern States Since the War,* 240-41.

869 Emphasis ours. Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 73, 47.

Testimony of Jewish Targeting of the Black Dollar

[T] he Negroes are a treasure for the Jews.

—

Fyodor
Dostoyevsky

Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821–1881) was a keen observer of the political, social, and cultural milieu of 19th-century Russian society, where Russian peasantry had very much the same relationship with their Jewish merchant class as Blacks would come to have with them in the American South. His 1877 indictment was biting indeed:

> [T]hey have already leaped *en masse* upon the millions of liberated Negroes, and have already taken a grip upon them in their, the Jews', own way, by means of their [everlasting] "gold pursuit" and by taking advantage of the inexperience and vices of the exploited tribe.…[T]he Negroes have now been liberated from the slave-owners, but they will not last because the Jews...will jump at this new little victim.…[T]he Negroes are a treasure for the Jews.[870]

Dostoyevsky was one of many who watched as Jews set up shop among the newly emancipated

Black farmers and laborers struggling to establish their long-deferred independence. Testimony from Southern residents and travelers to the region helps to form a more accurate picture of this important chapter in the history of Blacks and Jews.

In 1870, writer Robert Somers reported that in the deep southern town of Meridian, Mississippi, "The negro population is numerous, and much of the storekeeping business is conducted by sharp, active young men of Jewish aspect."[871] A decade later, German writer Ernst von Hesse-Wartegg, traveling through that town, was informed by a hotel clerk that "The niggers are in the hands of bloodsucking Jewish storekeepers and purveyors." Von Hesse's own observations led him to lament:

> How wrong it would be to believe *they* [Jews] have become more high-minded and merciful in the American South than they were in Russia or Poland.[872]

Atlanta Jew Louis Geffen described Decatur Street, the city's main Black shopping district, as "cluttered" with Jewish pawn and secondhand clothing shops. The main street in Memphis, Tennessee, drew comments from a host of observers, including journalist Jonathan Daniels, who described it as "a street of little Jews with gaudy goods seeking a living on the trade of poor Negroes." Dr. Clive Webb adds that "[n]early all of the bars, clubs and gambling joints" on the famous Beale Street—the "cultural capital of the southern African-American"—were Jewish-owned, as were the loan shops, such as Cohen's, Sonny's, Lipman's, and Nathan's Loans. George W. Lee corroborated Webb, writing that Memphis's main street was "owned largely by Jews, policed by the whites, and enjoyed by the Negroes." The Black section of Little

Rock, Arkansas, was described in an identical way.[873]

Charleston, South Carolina's King Street was transformed into a "mecca of small businesses," when Jewish merchants targeted "a mostly black clientele." In Union City, Tennessee, Jewish peddlers would come through *Niggertown* on their wagons "with tray after tray of jewelry." Clement Eaton commented on the wave of "dishonesty" that included "Jewish merchants who flocked to the South [and] preyed upon naïve Negroes." In Richmond, Virginia, the famous traveler and diarist Frederick Law Olmsted found that Jews were "thickly set in the narrowest and meanest streets, which seem to be otherwise inhabited mainly by negroes."[874] Dr. April Blackburn wrote that "Eastern European Jews predominantly lived in black neighborhoods, setting up businesses to cater to black customers."[875] A Jewish peddler newly arrived from Russia recounted his experience as a "greenhorn":

> I got off at the first station and walked a few miles until I saw black men working in the fields…I walked over and greeted them *as I had been instructed*.[876]

Simon Wiesenthal Center scholar Dr. Harold Brackman admits that the immigrant Jewish peddler "had an unprecedented opportunity to cultivate the patronage of Blacks." Elliott Ashkenazi adds that "[f]rom the storekeeper's point of view, the major change in the postwar period was the creation of a new group of customers, the former slaves." Ultimately, success for the Jewish merchant came to mean settling into a storefront operation in the Black sections of the South.[877]

Even before the “emancipation” of 1863, the pattern of Jewish merchants targeting Blacks was well established. Olmsted wrote unsympathetically in 1856 that

> A swarm of Jews, within the last ten years, has settled in nearly every Southern town, many of them men of no character, opening cheap clothing and trinket shops; ruining, or driving out of business, many of the old retailers, and engaging in an unlawful trade with simple negroes, which is found very profitable.[878]

A Barstow County, Georgia, resident claimed that “the country swarms” with Jews and “other speculators.”[879] Word of the American feeding frenzy got all the way back to Germany, where the Jewish press reported:

> In Louisiana the greatest benefit of the peddlers evolves from their dealings with the negroes, and especially with the negresses. As they are not allowed to leave the plantations, these depend solely on the itinerant traders for everything they may need. The young mestizas and mulattoes never lack money, especially if they are pretty, and know of no better way to spend their “love-pay” than to buy the finery and clothes offered to them by the smart Germans....[880]

So lucrative was this revenue vein that mass migrations of Blacks were shadowed by Jewish merchants. When 65,000 “freedmen” left South Carolina for Louisiana and Mississippi in the 1830s,

"[s]ome Jews," according to Ashkenazi, "can be found making the same migration."[881] And this is not an isolated phenomenon. According to Stuart Rockoff, of the Institute of Southern Jewish Life:

> The rural South started its decline around the time when African-Americans—the majority of whom had worked as agricultural laborers—began migrating to seek industrial jobs in Northern cities like Chicago. *Because of their migration, economic opportunity for Jewish merchants —who had relied on African-Americans as customers—diminished too*, and Jews started migrating to big cities as well.[882]

The newly forming and starkly segregated all-Black neighborhoods in the postbellum era were an open field for Jewish retailers. Debilitating Jim Crow laws were specifically designed to cripple Black economic progress, so Jewish merchants never had to face competition from any Black traders. All states had some form of vagrancy law like the one in South Carolina that included in its definition severe penalties for those Blacks found "vending, bartering or peddling any articles or commodities." Such laws, which included proscriptions against Black land ownership, effectively criminalized the development of a Black mercantile or business class and further undermined any challenge to the free flow of Black dollars to Jewish merchants.[883]

Yale sociologist John Dollard revealed, in his *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, that whites routinely "discredit[ed] the reliability of Negro professional people or merchants," in their effort to undermine the development of an independent Black middle class. Only in areas where whites had

no interest, such as in undertaking, dressmaking, and barbering, were some Blacks in some places able to gain a foothold.[884]

In Atlanta, the laws enabled Jews to establish their businesses amongst Blacks, but denied Blacks the right to set up shop in white neighborhoods. In this environment, according to Clive Webb, "black businessmen could never hope to compete with white storeowners," and clearly "Jews had the upper hand." In fact, because of "severe credit restrictions and fervid racism," the reporters at a credit company could identify only three Black-owned businesses in the entire city of Charleston.[885]

Of course, Black businesspeople did gallantly attempt to compete for Black trade wherever possible, and in many communities these small retailers formed the backbone of a microscopic Black middle class. But the well-financed Jewish mercantile network and their superior wholesale/retail assets simply overwhelmed any Black challenges.[886] For instance, Black Mississippians, comprising over half of the state's population, owned 19 general stores in 1883, only two of them in the very rural overwhelmingly Black Delta areas. By comparison, whites owned 2,229 general stores.[887]

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870 Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer,* trans. Boris Brasol (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1949), 642; Stephen J. Whitfield, *Voices of Jacob, Hands of Esau: Jews in American Life and Thought* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1984), 241-42; Stephen J. Whitfield, "Commercial Passions: The Southern Jew as Businessman," *AJH* 71 (March 1982): 354. It should be noted that Chinese merchants, primarily in the grocery business, were also notably involved in commerce with the ex-slaves. See Hazel M. McFerson, *Blacks and Asians: Crossings, Conflict, and Commonality* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2006), 30ff.

871 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 151. See also William C. Harris, *The Day of the Carpetbagger: Republican Reconstruction in Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1979), 280-81. The international correspondent Julian Ralph

confirmed that in Mississippi "The negroes deal with the local merchants, who are mainly Hebrews…" *Dixie; Or, Southern Scenes and Sketches* (New York, 1895), 156, reprinted in Albert Shaw, ed., *Review of Reviews and World's Work* (1895), 587.

872 Emphasis his. Frederick Trautmann, ed., *Travels on the Lower Mississippi, 1879-1880: A Memoir by Ernst von Hesse-Wartegg* (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1990), 74, 204. In the same paragraph that von Hesse-Wartegg discusses the "curse" of slave liberation (pp. 100-101), he writes:

> The leases on the little farms cost so much, however, and the lessee must pay the planter or the *Jewish storekeeper* such prices for food and other necessities that a former slave's annual debt amounted to a figure the hardest work and the best harvests could not equal. (Emphasis ours)

The author uses the words *Jewish storekeeper* as if they were understood to be interlinked and inseparable. See also another tourist's account of Louisiana showing Jewish business prominence in 1860, in Walter Prichard, ed., "A Tourist's Description of Louisiana in 1860," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 21 (Jan.-Oct. 1938): esp. 1127, 1135, 1156, 1168-70, 1176, 1177, 1195, 1198.

873 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 110 n. 13, 110; Clive Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers in the Age of Jim Crow," *SJH* 2 (1999): 62; Selma S. Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt: The Jewish Community of Memphis, Tennessee, 1840s-1960s* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1998), 114; Steven Hertzberg, "Southern Jews and Their Encounter with Blacks: Atlanta, 1850-1915," *Atlanta Historical Journal* 23 (1979): 12-13; Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978), 186-88.

874 Theodore Rosengarten, quoted in "Scholar Shares History of Jews in South Carolina," *Presbyterian College [magazine]*, 4 Nov. 2003; Stella Suberman, *The Jew Store: A Family Memoir* (Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books, 1998), 187; "Union City: Former Jewish Hub of Northwest Tennessee," *Circa* 17, no. 2 (spring 2008): 6; Clement Eaton, *The Waning of the Old South Civilization* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1968), 157; Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Cotton Kingdom* (1861; reprint, New York: Modern Library, 1953), 38. H.G. Wells wrote of "Russian Jews who prey upon colour in the Carolinas," in *The Future in America* (New York: Harper, 1906), 267.

875 April Elaine Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl': Jewish and Catholic Responses to New South Industrialization, 1880-1914" (Ph.D. diss., Temple Univ., 2002), 46. Dr. Blackburn writes for the *AJA* journal.

876 Emphasis ours. Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 183-84.

877 Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 331-32; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 41, 211; Carolyn Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all': The Folklore and Culture of Southern Jews" (Ph.D. diss.,

Indiana Univ., 1986), 41; Daniel R. Weinfeld, "Samuel Fleishman: Tragedy in Reconstruction-Era Florida," *SJH* 8 (2005): 62; John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1949; reprint, Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957), 4; Mark K. Bauman, "A Multithematic Approach to Southern Jewish History," in *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America*, ed. Marc Lee Raphael (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2008), 274. According to Stella Suberman's father, owner of Kaufman's Low Price Store, "a Jew store without solid Negro trade…was impossible." Suberman, *The Jew Store*, 109; "Union City," 6.

878 Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States* (1856; reprint, New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), 440. For this description Olmsted was accused of "anti-Semitism." See also Olmsted's *The Cotton Kingdom*, 196; and Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), 218. Dr. Harold Brackman ("The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 272-73) uses the same quotation, acknowledging that Olmsted "described a very real phenomenon of Southern life during the 1850's," though he charges Olmsted with "choosing adjectives which betray his prejudices." Olmsted also referred to "Jews" as being synonymous with moneylenders, in *The Cotton Kingdom*, 13, 250.

879 Leah Elizabeth Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South, 1858-1905" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999), 68.

880 Avraham Barkai, *Branching Out: German-Jewish Immigration to the United States, 1820-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1994), 63-64. "Germans" in this case—as in most cases—meant Jews.

881 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 17.

882 Emphasis ours. Cindy Siier, "The Long History and Strong Spirit of Jews in the Deep South," Goldring-Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, 2006, http://www.isjl.org/media/article_remote_communities.htm.

883 Wayne K. Durrill, "The South Carolina Black Code," in *True Stories From the American Past*, ed. William Graebner (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 12. See for instance Mary Ellen Curtin, "'Negro Thieves' or Enterprising Farmers? Markets, the Law, and African American Community Regulation in Alabama, 1866-1877," *Agricultural History* 74, no. 1 (winter 2000), 30: "By criminalizing all informal roadside markets…white merchants hoped to stamp out not only 'thieves' but also legitimate black farmers struggling to assert their right to the cotton they grew."

884 Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, 126-27. And here, it must be remembered, the term "Blacks" or "Negroes" is imprecise for this time. A class of lighter-skinned so-called *mulattos* developed as the illicit issue of the widespread institutionalized rape of the Black woman. [For Jewish complicity see *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* 1:37-38, 196-201; and Steven S. Sallie, "The Role of the Semitic Peoples in the Expansion of the World Economy via the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Literature Extraction and an Interpretation," *Journal of Third World Studies* 11, no. 2 (1994).] They

were given legal, social, and economic favor by whites and thus comprised the large majority of "free blacks" during slavery, and the business and professional class thereafter. In 1860 Mississippi, for example, there were 733 "free blacks"—601 of them classified as mulattos. Walker, *The History of Black Business in America*, 133-34, 396 n. 146, 401-2 n. 28; David C. Rankin, "The Origins of Black Leadership in New Orleans During Reconstruction," *JSoHis* 40, no. 3 (Aug. 1974): 426-28.

This racial favoritism was successfully practiced throughout America (and in all white colonial societies) as a very effective divide-and-conquer strategy. For an overview of the history of the mulatto in Black cultural development see Laurence A. Glasco, "Black and Mulatto: Historical Bases for Afro-American Culture," *Black Lines* 2, no. 1 (fall 1971): 22-30. See also Willard B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: The Black Elite, 1880-1920* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1990), particularly "The Color Factor" (chap. 6) and passim; Richard Bardolph, "Social Origins of Distinguished Negroes, 1770-1865," *JNH* 40, no. 3 (July 1955): 215-17 and note 7; Michael P. Johnson and James L. Roark, *Black Masters: A Free Family of Color in the Old South* (New York: Norton, 1984), 61-64, 215-18; Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer*, 7. Also, insurance became a lucrative business opportunity for some Blacks because white insurers believed that writing policies for Blacks was "unwise," for it gave Blacks who accumulated wealth a way to protect it. Blacks who were victims of periodic white violence, such as when the Black town of Rosewood and the Black section of Tulsa were burned to the ground, had to start over with nothing, whereas insured whites were often in better circumstances *after* their property was destroyed by fire, flood, or some other disaster. It was claimed that in this way Jewish criminals had actually profited from arson. See Jean Ulitz Mensch, "Social Pathology in Urban America: Desertion, Prostitution, Gambling, Drugs and Crime Among Eastern European Jews in New York City between 1881 and World War I " (Ph.D. diss., Columbia Univ., 1983), 184-88; Albert Fried, *The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Gangster in America* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1980), 26; Rowena Olegario, "'That Mysterious People': Jewish Merchants, Transparency, and Community in Mid-Nineteenth Century America," *Business History Review* 73, no. 2 (summer 1999): 180 n. 48.

885 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 121, 122, 125-26; Jeffery G. Strickland, "Ethnicity and Race in the Urban South: German Immigrants and African-Americans in Charleston, South Carolina During Reconstruction" (Ph.D. diss., Florida State Univ. College of Arts and Sciences, 2003), 61. Charleston was also the place where Jewish slave-trading was most active. See *Jews Selling Blacks* (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 2010).

886 Black merchants in America faced many obstacles (as they do now in the twenty-first century), including the refusal of loans from white-owned banks and the refusal of credit from white suppliers and wholesalers. Racial barriers in education, lack of formal business training, and discriminatory real estate practices kept them out of main commercial districts. Black merchants also had less police

protection than did whites and faced hostility from the courts. See Robert L. Boyd, "Residential Segregation by Race and the Black Merchants of Northern Cities during the Early Twentieth Century," *Sociological Forum* 13, no. 4 (Dec. 1998): 598.

887 See Ted Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi: Consumers, Poverty, and Culture, 1830-1998* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1999), 75. See also Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Colour Line: An Account of Negro Citizenship in the American Democracy* (New York: Doubleday, 1908), 230. Also, Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers," 68; Eugene P. Foley, "The Negro Businessman: In Search of a Tradition," *Dædalus* 95, no. 1 (winter 1966): 107-10; Bobby M. Wilson, "Race in Commodity Exchange and Consumption: Separate but Equal," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 95, no. 3 (2005): 601. Wilson tells of a white Memphis merchant named Barrett who charged three Black merchants with "competition" and sought to have their store closed. The incident precipitated a riot in which the three Blacks were murdered. See "The Memphis Lynchings," chap. 7 in *To Keep the Waters Troubled: The Life of Ida B. Wells*, by Linda O. McMurry (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), 130-149; "Lynching at the Curve," chap. 6 in *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*, ed. Alfreda M. Duster (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1970), 47-52. See also "Following Up 'The Negro and the Jew'," *New York Age*, 2 Feb. 1918, reprinted in *The Selected Writings of James Weldon Johnson,* vol. 1, *The New York Age Editorials, 1914–1923*, ed. Sondra K. Wilson (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), 172. Jewish Mississippian David L. Cohn confirmed that "no Negro has had a store in the white part of town." Quoted in James C. Cobb, ed., *The Mississippi Delta and the World: The Memoirs of David L. Cohn* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1995), 194. Also, Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society*, 167-68. See the comparison of Black and foreign-born white retail merchants in major cities between 1890 and 1910, in Higgs, *Competition and Coercion*, 92; John W. Blassingame, *Black New Orleans, 1860-1880* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1973), 215; John S. Butler, *Entrepreneurship and Self-Help Among Black Americans: A Reconsideration of Race and Economics* (New York: State Univ. of New York Press, 1991), 143-47; Paul K. Edwards, *The Southern Urban Negro as a Consumer* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 134-39; Walker, *The History of Black Business in America*, 151-54, 215-16, 224; Strickland, "Ethnicity and Race in the Urban South," 61: "Whites deeply resented African-American entrepreneurial spirit and refused to support their businesses." Such resentment was demonstrated in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where Blacks had achieved spectacular economic success until May 31, 1921, when the government not only "deputized" five hundred whites to massacre at least 300 well-to-do Blacks but also destroyed their community known as "The Black Wall Street" in the only aerial bombing of an American city in U.S. history. See Hannibal B. Johnson, *Black Wall Street: From Riot to Renaissance in Tulsa's Historic Greenwood District* (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 1998).

The Black–Jewish Encounter: Jewish Peddler & Black Customer

Jewish writers and historians who have dealt with the issue at all tend to sugarcoat the nature of the Black consumer–Jewish merchant relationship.[888] To Harry Golden's Southern eye, the Jewish peddler was the first white man "who conferred dignity upon the recently freed Negro slave…"[889] Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus romanticized this routine commercial intercourse when he reported that the Jewish peddler upon approaching a Southern plantation "received a hearty welcome from the planter on the balcony and *the grinning servants on the lawn.*"[890]

A more accurate picture emerges from the recollections of David Pearlman, a young emigrant from Russia who in the 1880s took up peddling like thousands of his fellow Jews.[891] He was trained in the business by his older cousin Sam, who taught him the art of becoming a true American:

> We have to do what the *goyim* [white Gentiles] like. There are so many of them here; and we are alone….Is it so bad that they should hate someone else [the Black man] for a change? Let them. It keeps them too busy to bother with us.[892]

Pearlman's account of his peddling forays reveals an aversion to blackness and a level of anti-Black hostility that is almost unfathomable. When Pearlman first saw his dark-skinned customers:

> He stepped back in fright; screamed, "A dybbuk;" and landed flat on his back pinned by the weight of his

> pack….Terrified, he spit in the air all around him, uttered a *kayn-ahora* to ward off the Evil Eye, and started to turn to run…[893]

The next passage, recalled with amusement, demonstrates the utter disrespect that the Black Southerners had to face on a daily basis:

> [He] spread the goods in the pack out on the ground, constantly glancing over his shoulder in order not to be surprised by these "dark strange looking" people, *occasionally spitting in their direction* for good measure…[894]

Eventually, the new peddler realized that his entire livelihood would be derived from selling to these Black *dybbuks*, and so, as historian Louis Schmier sardonically put it, "Dave's reliance on his saliva for protection diminished."[895] In contrast, the Blacks who greeted the Jewish peddler and dodged the spittle could not have been more hospitable, offering what they could from the humblest of resources, including overnight lodging, even though such generosity offended one or more of the many white racial taboos.[896] In fact, the "negro people" treated him so much "like kin that he'd forget sometimes to sell to them."[897] When Dave told his older cousin Sam that he had accepted one of those offers of Black generosity,

> Sam's face suddenly turned ashen white…."It is forbidden," Sam continued in a loud voice. "You can't associate with them in that way. Sell to them—yes. Take their money—yes. Say 'Good morning'—yes. Shake their hand if you

> want, but do it all outside." Sam's face began to redden as he yelled at Dave. Did he not notice they had never in three trips entered a black's house? Why did the boy think they had spread their merchandise out on the ground in front of the blacks' shacks while going into the homes of the white farmers to display their wares on the dinner tables? Did he ever see him accepting a sip of water from their wells? Did he not think it a coincidence that there was always an excuse for not staying in a black's shack and that each day's peddling should have ended at the house of a white family?[898]

The older man's explanation to his cousin was as far removed from any Old Testament doctrine as it could be:

> The *schwartzers* here are like we are in Russia. Do you understand? They are the *goyim's* Jews—outcasts, nothing, dirt!….There are *goyische* cossacks around here who don't like people doing things like what you done….I don't want to be better than the *goyim,* only the same—alive and well….You want to treat them like a *mensch,* treat them like a *mensch*. Do anything that makes you happy and me money.[899]

The young peddler did try to "treat them like a *mensch,"* but some cautious Blacks hesitated at such gestures from a white man. He asked his mentor for advice:

> I told you they won't appreciate it.

> David, the *goyim* say the *schwartzers* are like little children. Kindness is not always the right way to deal with them. Listen to the *goyim.* They belong here. They know more about these people. Let the *goyim* tell you how to handle these people.[900]

After a long and profitable career Dave reflected on his experiences:

> [H]e knew he owed not only his personal survival and prosperity to his black customers, but that of his family as well. At every weekend family gathering, Dave was reminded that the financial success for which his black customers were responsible had enabled him to bring his relatives and friends away from the persecutions in Russia to safety in Georgia during the decades that followed….“You are here because of them (the blacks). What you have now is because of them.”[901]

Once traded like cattle, the “free” Black man and woman now became a vital cash cow for the Jewish people. Black businesswoman Hattie G. Escridge submitted a paper at the Fourth Annual Conference for the Study of the Negro Problems in 1899, in which she wrote:

> We have aided the Jew from the time he came into our neighborhood with his store on his back…until now he has a large brick building, a number of clerks, and he and family ride in a fine carriage drawn by expensive horses, and they

driven by a Negro.[902]

But French traveler Edward S. Abdy adroitly described the early stages of this inequitable state of Black–Jewish affairs as far back as 1833. Blacks in Georgia, Abdy said, are

> obliged to have a guardian, being considered an infant in the eye of the law….[In Savannah] the Jews are generally agents for the colored people, and are well paid for their services. They seldom act dishonestly toward their clients, for the love of gain serves as a check to one another's avarice. They have the whole trade in their hands; and the wealth it brings secures them respect and a favorable reception from the whites. The colored people look upon them as their friends. This is a curious state of society, and the more remarkable, as something of the same kind, arising from similar causes, prevails in Poland.[903]

Late into the twentieth century, this successful Jewish colonization of the Black dollar was noted by the great sociologists of the day. What particularly impressed Jewish social anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker was that the business section of Indianola, Mississippi—where "the bulk of Negro buying is done"—was "owned for the most part by Jews."[904] And later John Dollard noted that these Jewish-owned businesses "were crammed with Negroes."[905] Dr. Clive Webb said that "Jews tapped into a rich vein of business opportunity," and he further attributes the success of Jewish merchants to "the black customer," admitting that

he "provided the peddler with a large percentage of his income."[906] A Mississippi planter's son, William Alexander Percy, became a lawyer and a poet and wrote of his cherished Delta upbringing:

> Every American community has its leaven of Jews. Ours arrived shortly after the Civil War with packs on their backs… They sold trinkets to the Negroes and saved. Today they are plantation-owners, bankers, lawyers, doctors, merchants; their children attend the great American universities, win prizes, become connoisseurs in the arts and radicals in politics.[907]

This strategy of racial targeting had been so effective at building wealth for Jews that it was readily employed in the major Black population centers of the North, and remains the dominant economic model of the American inner city—enabling all immigrant populations seeking economic stability to develop and build on a secure and reliable economic foundation. As Jack Nusan Porter wrote in 1980, "middlemen" occupations, such as pawnbrokers, gold and silver sellers, diamond jewelers, and moneylenders, "still exist in Black ghettos, where the Jew plays the same role he played 100 to 200 years ago in rural America."[908]

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888 Louis Schmier, "'For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough': A Jewish Peddler and His Black Customers Look at Each Other," *AJH* 73, no. 1 (Sept. 1983): 54.

889 Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer,* 33. And see his *Ess, Ess, Mein Kindt: Eat, Eat, My Child* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1966), 175.

890 Emphasis ours. Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 7.

891 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 39-55.

892 Ibid., 48-49. See also Louis Schmier, "Hellooo! Peddler Man!

Hellooo!" in *Ethnic Minorities in Gulf Coast Society*, eds. Jerrell H. Shofner and Linda V. Ellsworth (Pensacola, FL: Gulf Coast History & Humanities Conference, 1979), 79.

893 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 45. A *dybbuk* or *dibbuk* is a ghost.

894 Emphasis ours. Ibid. This practice of spitting at a perceived evil, according to Jewish scholar Israel Shahak, seems to have its roots in the Jewish holy book Talmud. He wrote that among European Jews "it became customary to spit (usually three times) upon seeing a church or a crucifix….Sometimes insulting biblical verses were also added." See Shahak's *Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years* (London: Pluto Press, 1994), 93.

895 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 45-46.

896 Harry Golden confirmed that "many people were particularly anxious to have him [the peddler] as a lodger for the night." See *Our Southern Landsman* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), 158-59; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 135; Schmier, "Hellooo! Peddler Man! Hellooo!" 80, 81, quoting Gentile Ira Treadaway:

> Peddlers like H. Lazarus and P. Lazarus would sit with us at the table like a family….We'd have their jewfood ready for them and we'd eat hog-meat. Didn't understand it none, but they were sincere and God's children. We appreciated and respected them for that. My daddy used to say they had religion which was more'n could be said for some Christians.

Also ibid., 87 n. 25 and 28.

897 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 47.

898 Ibid., 47-48. Schmier maintains that the Jewish peddlers were "demonstrating their compassion for their black customers" by accepting overnight lodging from them—though there is no suggestion that they paid for this amenity. Also, Ted Ownby discusses a Mississippi man who had become so disgusted with the overnight requests of peddlers that he began charging them. See his *American Dreams in Mississippi*, 22.

Jewish Southerner Harry L. Golden was very clear: "To be sure, they [Jews] would no more think of mixing socially with them [Blacks] than they did with the peasants of Eastern Europe. Such social contacts as they had were with their own, or with friendly and curious white Southerners." See his "Jew and Gentile in the New South: Segregation at Sundown," *Commentary,* Nov. 1955, 410.

899 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 48-49. "Cossacks" are the Russian soldiers; *goyim* and *schwartzers* are demeaning Yiddish (a language commonly spoken by Eastern European Jews) words meaning "Gentiles" and "niggers," respectively; *mensch* means human being.

900 Ibid., 49.

901 Ibid., 54.

902 Hattie G. Escridge, "The Need of Negro Merchants," in

American Negro: His History and Literature, Atlanta University Publications, no. 4 (New York: Arno Press, 1968), 61.

903 Edward S. Abdy came to America to study the prison system and then went on to investigate slavery and race relations. In chapter 33 of his *Journal of a Residence and Tour in the United States,* vols. 1-3 (London, 1835), there is a section he titles "Free Blacks Wards to Jews."

904 Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom: A Cultural Study in the Deep South* (1939; reprint, New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), 9, 10. Also cited by Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 106 n. 8.

905 Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, 4, 128-29. He attributed the success of Jewish merchants to their ability to win "the Negro trade." Arnold Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends: Afro-Americans View the Immigrant* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982), 114; Henry L. Feingold, *Zion in America: The Jewish Experience from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York: Twayne, 1974), 59-60; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 106.

906 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 110, 102. Webb adds (p. 103): "Peddlers derived much of their income through their trade with black sharecroppers." Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 38, refers to one Jewish peddler as representative of all peddlers: "he befriended the poorer people and solicited their trade."

907 William Alexander Percy, *Lanterns on the Levee: Recollections of a Planter's Son* (New York: Knopf, 1941), 17.

908 Jack Nusan Porter, "Mr. Goldberg and John Henry: The Relationship Between Afro-Americans and American Jews," in *The Sociology of American Jews: A Critical Anthology* (Washington, DC: Univ. Press of America, 1980), 236. In 1895, a reporter for the *New York Daily Tribune* observed a scene in the "Negro quarter" of New York City where "the Hebrews across the street stand out in front of their shops and impress the [c]heapness of their goods upon everybody within earshot." See Wilson, "Race in Commodity Exchange and Consumption," 594. In Georgetown, South Carolina, "pullers" would perform this function on Front Street. See ISJL, "Georgetown, South Carolina."

Jewish Merchants and Jim Crow Discrimination

How a group earns its bread is a crucial determinant not only of its condition but of its consciousness: how it thinks, and about what it thinks. In many cases, although strange to say not in the case of American Jewry, it can even tell the historian why a group behaves a certain way politically. In a word, a group's economic activity is a sure fingerprint to discover its identity.

—Dr. Henry L. Feingold, Baruch College

Racial apartheid continued to infect all of America after the Civil War, developing into its peculiar regional forms. And in their zeal to claim mastery of the Black retail dollar, Southern Jews had no intention of challenging this harsh racial

protocol.[909] In fact, their very success dictated that they fully enforce it. Without the Jim Crow laws and customs to undermine Black development, the wages earned by the former slaves would have become the solid foundation of a post-slavery Black economy.

Every white citizen under Jim Crow was legally obligated to uphold and enforce white supremacy, and all whites understood and appreciated the benefits they derived from its maintenance. Given this reality, the civilian operators of retail establishments doubled as Jim Crow deputies when circumstances required.[910]

Jewish merchants fully subscribed to these demeaning Black Codes and aggressively affirmed again and again that they were steadfastly on the white side of the racial divide. Department stores in the South were a stronghold of Jewish retailers, and, writes Dr. Clive Webb, "reinforced every idea of the African-American's inferiority." In fact, Jewish merchants, representing that subset of the white population with the most direct and regular association with Blacks, became the front line of this oppressive culture, choosing *willingly* to enforce these degrading laws and reporting any Black offenders to the authorities. Retail establishments had their own set of laws and customs that were entirely under the enforcement control of the proprietor. Webb writes that water fountains and restrooms were all rigidly segregated. And "[s]uch facilities were not just separate and unequal; sometimes they did not exist at all."[911]

Racial exclusion by the bigger downtown retailers actually served to funnel Black trade to those merchants operating in the Black sections of town. The resulting monopoly allowed these merchants to set artificially high prices for their

wares.

The Jim Crow "Jew Store" • Stella Suberman's Russian Jewish immigrant family ran what she called a "Jew store" in Union City, Tennessee, in the 1920s. The town's Black section was called *Niggertown,* where "all the town's Negroes lived" in "shacks" and "huts." The streets were unpaved and raw sewage ran into open ditches. She recalls that among Jewish people, "Negroes were spoken of, with a touch of disparagement,"[912] even though their dollars were heartily accepted. These Jews made no effort to ameliorate the injustices carried out in their very midst. Family friend Eli Bronstein exemplified this indifference: "I'm here for a living," he stated, "not a crusade."[913]

In the Suberman family's *Jew Store*, called Kaufman's Low Price Store, Black customers would only be served after all whites had been attended to. If a white man entered while a Black was being helped, the Black would have to step aside. Suberman, writing in the 1990s, seems resentful that a Black maid found a loophole in this demeaning practice:

> A little white girl in her charge was her ticket to standing where she pleased. She could ignore the rule that Negroes must stand to the rear.[914]

Suberman's mother fell right into the white immigrant's customary role of viewing and treating the *native-born* Blacks as the aliens:

> The presence of these *shvartzerim* [Yiddish for niggers]…made her uneasy. Naturally she never spoke to them, but she also never *looked* at them except

> when she was sure they would not catch her. And *oy*, their speech! Like from under blankets.[915]

Another *Jew store* in Stella Suberman's town, named Edelstein's, had dressing rooms that had "hand-printed paper signs reading WHITE MEN on one and WHITE LADIES on the other." Her father, she said, dreamed of having dressing rooms in his establishment that were better than the ones at Edelstein's, but his "hopes did not extend to dressing rooms for Negroes."[916]

He dreamed of being just like the Gentile store down the street, which had its luxurious shoe department with its upholstered chairs intended to make every customer "feel like a king"—but "for white trade only." "Negroes," she writes, "tried on shoes from atop a crate in the back alley and tested them on a strip of rug laid down there."[917] A "Jew store" custom entailed Blacks' bringing unsatisfactory purchases to the back door to arrange there for a return or an exchange.[918]

The family of famed New Orleans playwright Lillian Hellman owned a "Jew store." She insisted that her family's aim was "to make money, nothing else." German-born author Ludwig Lewisohn immigrated with his family in 1890 to South Carolina, where his merchant father often "treated the Negro customers with contemptuous disregard." Dan Phillips' family operated the M.M. Cohn department store in Little Rock, Arkansas, and he testified that Black women had a problem buying corsets, "because stores didn't want them to try them on."[919]

In 1881, a Black editor of a New Orleans paper castigated the Jewish vendors at a Louisiana resort for refusing to sell refreshments to Blacks. "The

Jews, of all other people," he wrote, "should be the last to discriminate."[920] So resented was this Jewish policy of discrimination that in 1877, when Lt. Henry O. Flipper, the first Black graduate of West Point, told a Black crowd that he and a white officer had been served a drink of soda at Schumann's Drugstore, "[t]he crowd, appreciative of the difficulties, loudly applauded."[921]

By the Depression years, even Jews expressed indignation at the exploitative practices of Jewish merchants. The April 1936 issue of the NAACP's *Crisis* magazine carried a letter from Samuel Rosenberg of Hampton, Virginia, that blamed these merchants for being an impediment to Black economic progress:

> One of the obstacles which helps to lower his standard of living is the retail merchant….Southern Jews from Rabbis to merchants regard the Negro as a second or third class being.[922]

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909 Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 353.

910 See for instance Hale, *Making Whiteness,* 168-79.

911 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 128.

912 Suberman, *The Jew Store*, 69-70, 26. Suberman still used the term *Negro* in the 1990s, at least 40 years after it had fallen out of common use. On "huts" and Jews, see Helen Kohn Hennig, *The Tree of Life: Fifty Years of Congregational Life at the Tree of Life Synagogue, Columbia, S.C.* (Columbia: Tree of Life Congregation, 1945), 11. Suberman in her book uses the pseudonyms "Concordia" for Union City, and "Bronson's" for Kaufman's. See "Union City: Former Jewish Hub of Northwest Tennessee," *Circa* 17, no. 2 (spring 2008): 6.

913 Suberman, *The Jew Store*, 26. Also Mark K. Bauman, *The Southerner As American* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1996), 36. Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers," 55, states that Bronstein "held no prejudice towards African Americans," though his source (Suberman, *The Jew Store*) does not say this.

914 Suberman, *The Jew Store,* 192. See this "custom" discussed in Evans, *The Provincials*, 316-17. For a general discussion of these discriminatory retail customs and practices, see Charles S. Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1943),

70-71.

915 Suberman's mother was "unnerved" that a "cook" named Lizzie Maud "had turned out to be a Negro. *Oy*. She had to shop with a Negro and she would have to cook next to her, too." Suberman, *The Jew Store*, 33, 65, 66. See also Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1998), 17-18.

916 Suberman, *The Jew Store*, 62-63.

917 Ibid., 88-89. Shoe and clothing manufacture and trade were a virtual Jewish monopoly throughout the United States. See *UJE* (1942), s.v. "needle trades"; Eric E. Hirshler, ed., *Jews from Germany in the United States* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1955), 60-61. See also William Henry Chafe, *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Tell About Life in the Segregated South* (New York: New Press, 2001), 5-6.

918 Suberman*, The Jew Store*, 63. "Unsatisfactory," because unlike whites, Blacks were not allowed to try on articles of clothing until *after* they were purchased. See Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer,* 70-73.

919 Whitfield, *Voices of Jacob,* 242; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 109, 128; Ludwig Lewisohn, *Up Stream: An American Chronicle* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1922), 52-53.

920 Arnold Shankman, "Friend or Foe? Southern Blacks View the Jew," in *"Turn to the South": Essays on Southern Jewry*, eds. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1979), 114; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 118.

921 Howard N. Rabinowitz, *Race Relations in the Urban South, 1865-1890* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1978), 195. For a similar incident see Wilmoth A. Carter, *The Urban Negro in the South* (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), 103.

922 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 127.

The "Jew Store" in Black Folklore

The farmer is the man that feeds them all…They'll take him by the hand, lead him through the land, Then the merchant he's the man that gets it all.

—"Fiddlin'" John Carson

Jim Crow insulated merchants from any legal retribution by aggrieved Black customers; hence, there are no lawsuits to review, no criminal complaints to examine, no court dockets to reflect the mercantile abuse directed at the Black citizen as consumer. The only forum where one may find reference to these everyday interactions is in the realm of Black folklore, and it amounts to the only available *direct testimony* from those who suffered the indignities of retail shopping in the apartheid South. And the image of the "Jew store" is at best unflattering.[923] Clive Webb affirms that

> Jewish retailers evidently earned themselves an unfavourable reputation amongst African-Americans. The black folklore of the time is full of tales about the unscrupulous Jew.[924]

By some accounts Jews were reported to be

"incomparable con artists" trying "to pass off every piece of worthless junk as a priceless jewel." Many felt that Jewish stores routinely sold stale food and inferior clothes and furniture. Certain expressions became part of the everyday parlance of the South and "evinced the avaricious instincts of the Jews." Among these, according to Clive Webb, were "I won't go to that Jew place," "Jew you out of your money," and "Jew 'em down."[925] Ruth Scheinberg claimed that Southern Jewish merchants treated their Black customers fairly, but asserted contradictorily that "black people were relegated to buying inferior products by ruthless merchants."[926]

Wary about confronting the Jew—a white man—Blacks instead indicted the merchant with humor. When a Black man returns a badly shrunken suit to the Jewish merchant: "Sho, I remembers you," the Jew says looking at the suit, "but my! How you has growed!" Another tale described how "This Jew had this store, and all his suits were white, and this man went in and asked could he see a *blue* suit. The old Jew said, 'Turn on de blue light, Mary!'"[927]

As a social center the general store represented the communal space where Jim Crow's unwritten regulations were most explicitly enforced. All other official and social institutions, such as the schools, courts, churches, train stations, and places of employment, were rigidly segregated; the general store, as the region's only retailer of many essential goods, was often the only place where interaction between whites and Blacks was mostly unrestricted—racially choreographed, but officially unrestricted.[928] In other places signs like WHITE and COLORED were adequate in managing interracial contact, but at the store the merchant himself set the tone and enforced Jim Crow, ever aided by the

town's white men.

The merchant also maintained strict control over Blacks' buying choices, often limiting them to the cheapest "negro market" manufactures. No white woman could maintain her self-respect if a garment she purchased was available to a Black woman, so merchants carefully protected white female "dignity" and refused Black women items of equal quality. More important, the all-powerful general store merchant enforced proscriptions against Blacks owning guns, receiving certain literature, and having credit equal to whites; the merchant enforced the demeaning back door service and often refused to provide receipts for transactions.[929] He refused Black shoppers the right to try on hats, shoes, and garments, or to return them if unsatisfied.

Blacks who may have sought relief from these daily insults through the mail-order catalogues of Sears & Roebuck, or Montgomery Ward, soon realized that their mail purchases were jealously monitored by the merchant—who often was the local postmaster. And because the rural store sometimes served as the only place where the sheriff or a doctor could be reached, the merchant was positioned to assume yet another level of control.[930]

And, like all other merchants, the "Jew store" owner openly displayed products with demeaning and racist caricatures on their labels. Country stores were known to display Black body parts from the latest lynching; they sold postcards with photos of lynching victims; they reported to authorities actions they considered suspicious among Blacks;[931] and they served whites they knew to be Ku Klux Klan members. Indeed, several Jewish merchants actually supplied the hooded terrorists with sheets,

hoods, and guns. There is no evidence that Jews were any different from other white merchants in their participation in the ugliest forms of white supremacy.

Blacks resented their treatment and voiced their anger in their newspapers, and sometimes they even organized in reaction. In 1913, the *Chicago Defender* ran the unambiguous headline: ABRAHAM BASS (JEWISH) FINED $50 AND COSTS FOR CHEATING IN WEIGHT AT 2816 STATE MRS. HATTIE BROWN. The editors noted that such practices had been going on for years, and that

> Jews have grown rich by stealing the hardearned money of the poor laboring class of colored people….It is reported that the Jews have a system all over the city to "skin" their brothers in black.

It was the same in New York City. In 1912, the *New York Age* warned that "The Jew is becoming a leader if not a dictator."[932] In Brunswick, Georgia, Blacks boycotted a Jewish merchant who had made racist remarks. The *Baltimore Afro-American* cheered the action with a hostility that suggests that such ill-treatment was frequently experienced: "This is the right way to treat our enemies. Make them feel our power."[933] Sometimes this animosity would become national news. In 1916, a Cleveland newspaper published a tragic story of a "Jew store" in Jacksonville, Florida:

> **'Colored Folks' Boycott Store:** Colored citizens here are showing their resentment against a Jewish merchant whose son is alleged to have raped an 11-year-old Colored girl, by refusing to patronize his…st[o]re. The store has a

> large Colored patronage, probably 90 per cent of its total business. Crazed by the loss of his Colored customers, the merchant attempted suicide a few days ago.[934]

In 1925, the NAACP's *Crisis* magazine confronted this ugly aspect of the Black–Jewish relationship and asked, "IS THE JEW A FRIEND OF THE NEGRO?" Their answer was revealing and historically accurate:

> No Southern rabbi has jeopardized his position or his life by running counter to the Klan's dictum that black and white must be forever separate….the Jew of the merchant class, the ubiquitous representative, is satisfied to accept the situation as he finds it.[935]

With virtually no evidence of Southern Jews challenging the racial status quo, Jewish historians have sometimes projected a sense of morality onto their subjects. Ruth Scheinberg examined the racial behavior of one retailer, but when the available facts did not support a philanthropic motive, she provides one anyway:

> Benny Grusin treated black customers like all customers, although he probably had more empathy for the blacks, knowing full well what suffering and discrimination meant.[936]

The beginning clause of this statement is simply unsupportable given the times and the place—the Deep South. Grusin would not, for instance, have made a white customer wait for service while he

finished with a Black—an act tantamount to that of Rosa Parks. And there are many similar suppositions that could be advanced to make the point. Jewish writers ascribe a feeling of racial sympathy to merchants like Grusin, but provide no corroborating evidence from the merchants themselves or from those who were most rudely affected—the Black consumers. The fact is Jewish merchants practiced segregation in their retail establishments and enforced the cruel Jim Crow laws voluntarily, happily, and, most of all, quite profitably.

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923 According to Harry Golden—offering no proof—the "Jew Store" had earned a favorable reputation among Black consumers. Golden, "Jew and Gentile in the New South," 410:

> Of course, some Jews are offended by the term "Jew store," mistaking its innocent character. There are Jewish merchants who, taking exception to a Negro's asking, "Is this a Jew store?" retort, "Yes, this is a Jew store for niggers."

Some Southern Blacks have recalled growing up believing that the term they had always heard and innocently used was "juice store," applying no ethnic character at all. See also Golden's *Forgotten Pioneer*, 40. Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 61: "Grusin's store became known as the 'Jew Store,' but never in a derogatory sense. In later years, the phrase was not used in a kind manner." Mississippi merchants Ettenger and Tandler described their store as "the Jew's Store." Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi,* 23. See also a mention of it in Virginia folklore in A. M. Bacon and E. C. Parsons, "Folk-Lore from Elizabeth City County, Virginia," *Journal of American Folklore* 35, no. 137 (July–Sept. 1922): 306.

924 White historians have traditionally followed the racial practices of the American court system, which affirmed that testimony from Blacks would not be accepted as truth; therefore they generally regard Black testimony as "folklore," whilst testimony from whites qualifies as "history." Clive Webb accepts these standards in "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 115-16.

925 Ibid.

926 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 35; Hale, *Making Whiteness,* 172-73.

927 Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977), 305-6; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 116. For a similar "joke" see *The Clarion* (Jackson, Miss.), 17 March 1886, 4.

928 Hale, *Making Whiteness*, 172-73.

929 Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi*, 71.

930 Robert E. Weems, Jr., *Desegregating the Dollar: African American Consumerism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1998), 1, 24-25; Thompson, "Country Stores," 56-57, 58; Marilyn Kay Cheatham Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric: Nineteenth-Century Jewish Merchants Living Texas Reality and Myth" (Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M Univ., 2003), 206. On the use of mail-order catalogues by Blacks, see Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer*, 56; Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi*, 75; Hale, *Making Whiteness*, 177, 179; Stanley Farbstein, "Country Roads and Country Stores," *Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 10, no. 2 (summer 2005): 3. See also The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, *The Fall of America* (Chicago: Muhammad's Temple of Islam No. 2, 1973), 80.

931 Hale, *Making Whiteness*, 172-76.

932 David J. Hellwig, "Black Images of Jews: From Reconstruction to Depression," *Societas* 8, no. 3 (summer 1978): 216-17; Leon F. Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Knopf, 1998), 357-58. Also, see the observations of Harlem's merchants by Amy Jacques Garvey, the wife of the Hon. Marcus M. Garvey, in *Negro World*, 28 April 1923, quoted in Isabel Boiko Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism: Negroes and Jews in New York, 1880 to World War II" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of New Mexico, 1973), 133. See also Huey L. Perry and Ruth B. White, "The Post-Civil Rights Transformation of the Relationship Between Blacks and Jews in the United States," *Phylon* 47, no. 1 (1986): 52-53; and Carlos Cooks's observations in *Carlos Cooks and Black Nationalism: From Garvey to Malcolm,* eds. Robert Harris, Nyota Harris, and Grandassa Harris (Dover, MA: The Majority Press, 1992), 125. A 1925 survey by the *New York Age* found that Black merchants *in Harlem* garnered only four percent of local retail sales. See Ivan H. Light, *Ethnic Enterprise in America: Business and Welfare among Chinese, Japanese, and Blacks* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1972), 118-20. Also, David Caplovitz, *The Poor Pay More: Consumer Practices of Low-Income Families* (New York: Free Press, 1967); and David Caplovitz, *The Merchants of Harlem: A Study of Small Business in a Black Community* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973), 116-24.

933 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 105.

934 *Cleveland Advocate*, 27 May 1916, 1.

935 David H. Pierce, "Is The Jew a Friend of The Negro?" *Crisis,* vol. 30, Aug. 1925, 184. Today some Jewish scholars, like Mark K. Bauman, still maintain that the historical relationship between Blacks and Jews in the South "can best be described…[as an] ambivalent friendship." See his essay "A Multithematic Approach to Southern Jewish History," in *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America*, ed. Marc Lee Raphael (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2008), 279.

936 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 61. Also, Leon Harris makes similar unsupported claims about the "bad conscience[s]" of Jewish merchants, in *Merchant Princes: An Intimate History of Jewish Families Who Built Great Department Stores* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 127.

Selling to the Shvartze: Methods to Win "Negro Trade"

[I] t was rumored that a Jewish merchant would make every possible concession to record a first sale for the day, and so farmers would vie with each other to be the first one in the store, in the hope of getting a bargain.

—Harry Golden

[He] now became a cross-roads merchant of Jewish descent and shrewdness, who knew how to allure and hold his black customers.

—

W.E.B. Du Bois

Jewish scholar David Hellwig outlined the general feeling about the tactics of Jewish

merchants operating in the South's Black Belt:

> Another criticism of southern Jews was the way they exploited gullible black farmers by feigning friendship. Jews deliberately established businesses in heavily black areas. They warmly welcomed their neighbors, employing all sorts of devices to suggest that they were the black man's friend. At the same time they avoided politics for fear of antagonizing powerful whites. Should a lynching occur, Jews extricated themselves from a difficult position by claiming an inadequate command of English. Once they had filled their pockets and in the process forced Negro competitors out of business, they sold their businesses to other poor ambitious Jews and moved to where they did not have to depend on the freedmen's trade.[937]

Whites, generally, used an array of deceitful techniques to cripple Black opportunities in business, and many of them have been documented in the historical literature. Because the Jewish merchant dealt with a population that possessed no civil rights, the distinct advantage in his encounters with Black customers, without exception, accrued to the merchant. There were no real "bargains" for the captive consumer in such a system, and no appeals could be made to any authority when cheating was suspected. This shotgun relationship was described in various ways by many who witnessed the daily fleecing of the Black "freedmen" in the South. Here are some of the methods used by Southern merchants to capture the "negro trade."[938]

"Mr." & "Mrs." Ex-Slave

"Over and over again," reported Dollard, "one hears from Negroes that southern [Gentile] dry goods merchants have been crowded out of the territory by their rough, hostile, categorical treatment of Negroes." Jewish storekeepers by contrast "treated Negroes with courtesy, or at least without discourtesy, in strictly business relations." By offering Blacks some—but not all—of the shopping courtesies afforded to all whites, Jews were able to persuade large sections of the Black community to patronize their establishments when they had a choice of retailers. In the "Jew store" they could even "bargain" for a better price. Jewish retailers had learned that eliminating the use of insulting terms for Blacks such as "boy" or "nigger" enhanced their attractiveness to a people starved for respect. This was not altruism or even generosity on the part of the Jewish businessman—the often obscene overpricing of goods eliminated either of those as potential motivations—but instead a stratagem for market dominance.[939]

Some Jewish merchants went so far with this strategic ingratiation as to call Black customers "Mr." or "Mrs." But more often, writes Dollard, "They find some way of avoiding the 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' question, such as by saying 'What can I do for you?' and letting it go at that." Dr. Harold Brackman points out that these methods "began to earn rich dividends" for the Jewish retailers.[940]

Back-Room Persuasion

The *New York Times* carried the observations of a correspondent who upon traveling to the Southern cotton town of Huntsville, Alabama, reported a retail tactic designed to enhance sales among the

Black plantation workers and sharecroppers:

> [E]nterprising vendors have established refreshment tables. These are found on "nigger day" situated in different parts of the court-house square. They are plentifully supplied with fried fresh fish, boiled bacon, and corn bread, and for twenty cents a hungry black man is furnished with all he can eat. When they have satisfied their appetites they go first to the dry-goods stores. Here, as in the other shops, they are met by obsequious white men, who conduct them at once to a back or side room, with which most of the stores are supplied. At first I could not fathom the mystery of this ceremony. After diligent inquiry, however, I discovered that, since the war, unprincipled storekeepers, some of them Northern men, have established the custom of giving the country negroes who come to buy, as much whiskey as they wish to drink. This is done in the back rooms I have mentioned, and when the unfortunate black men and women are deprived of half their wits by the vile stuff which is served out to them they are induced to purchase all sorts of useless and expensive goods.[941]

In a similar vein, Clive Webb remarked that the Jewish merchant "trad[ed] in all things with African-Americans," including such socially destructive commodities as beer, wine, and liquor. And in so doing, the merchants were "not so much providing the lifeblood of the black community, as injecting it with poison."[942]

High-Pressure Sales Tactics

The white merchant in the South had a monopolistic advantage over the Black consumer, and Dollard reports a method of coercing the Black customer into a sale:

> It was said by one of the Jewish merchants that they use more sales pressure on Negroes than they dare do on the whites. If white buyers say "no," they mean "no" and the traders do not insist. But if the Negro says "no," they go on, get the goods out, and try them on him. Thus the merchants take advantage of their position as members of the white caste in using a certain amount of persuasive coercion.[943]

One technique used by rural merchants was to pay Black farmers for their crop at the "back of the store" so that they would have to run a gantlet of insistent white salesmen on their way out. If the farmer came with his wife, the couple would be separated at the door and the crop transaction might take extra-long so that the wife could be subjected to extreme pressure to commit their earnings to some overpriced product. These kinds of tactics led Black author Harold Cruse to cite "the Jewish storekeeper and trader" as the source of enmity between the Jew and the Southern Black man.[944] Oscar Williams also described the pressure Jewish merchants applied to Black customers:

> Merchants would insist that the potential buyer try-on the item. After this came what Blacks call "Jewing down," in which naïve Blacks were [led] to believe

> that the Jewish merchant had allowed himself to be beaten on the price. The marked up and then down concession scheme left both parties happy. The Jewish merchant received his desired price and the naïve Black went away with the overpriced goods.[945]

Dollard learned from his interviews that Jews

> bargain with the Negroes and the Negroes like this. Other merchants are more likely to follow a strict one-price policy….Negro[es]...get satisfaction out of the fact that the Jewish merchant appears to allow himself to be beaten.[946]

Playing the Bible Card

Some Jewish merchants used their religious faith to induce their customers to buy from them. Dr. Leah Hagedorn of the University of Mississippi wrote:

> Jewish peddlers believed that their rural customers were more likely to buy from them if the Gentiles perceived Jews as "personal friend[s] of the prophets." Gentiles exhibited interest and awe in hearing Hebrew spoken. African American customers urged Jewish peddlers to "say something holy" and to read to them in Hebrew.[947]

Ruth Scheinberg studied the Southern Jewish peddler culture and confirmed that Jewish people were often looked upon as "living witnesses of the Word or even as authorities on Hebrew and the Old

Testament."[948] There is even evidence that some God-fearing Blacks thought it would be counted as a charitable act that might ease their admission to heaven if they purchased products from a Jewish merchant.[949] And Jews did nothing to discourage this fallacy.

One Georgia-based peddler, Charles Wessolowsky, found that the farmers respected his religious observance, even going out of their way to provide him with kosher meals. Another Georgia peddler counseled his apprentice, "Don't hide being Jewish. It makes them feel good." But the degree or level of outward expression of their faith, it appears, had to be carefully managed. The apprentice was cautioned to take off his prayer shawl and skull cap and leave them at home, "Because, we can't be *too* Jewish and *too* different."[950]

This calculated Judaism had a clear profit motive. In slavery, Blacks became strong believers in the Hebrew scriptures. Booker T. Washington said that as a slave he had been taught "to compare the condition of the Negro with that of the Jews in bondage in Egypt." Consequently, some Blacks literally *bought* into these pious plantation parables, believing the scriptures were actually describing the peddlers and shopkeepers in their midst, who they believed had stepped straight from the pages of *Deuteronomy*.[951] Jews played up this holy mythology, and, according to Arnold Shankman, "persuaded blacks that 'they must be the children of the Lord.'" This superstitious perception of divine product endorsement gave the Jewish merchants ordained access to "negro money."[952]

One peddler was known to modify the familiar *Exodus* story for his Black customers, to reflect his own recent "exodus" from Russia:

> Those people [Blacks] would be agog hearin' that whites did to other whites worse than what was done to them, especially to *"holy people" like us*. It sure did make them feel better knowing they weren't the only ones treated that way.[953]

Jews gauged the level of piety they would publicly display based on what they perceived were the expectations of their Southern Gentile customers. According to Dr. Leah Hagedorn,

> Many peddlers came to believe that Gentile respect for them was proportionate to the degree of Orthodoxy of their religious practice, which served to emphasize their connection to the Old Testament.[954]

Some Christians, captivated by the hyper-inflated holy résumé of the Jewish storekeepers, assumed them to be "masters of Biblical exegesis."[955] One peddler reported he was frequently asked questions about the Bible and was "often required to settle religious disputes 'because I was a Jew and they all looked upon me as an authority.'"[956] Another, Morris Witcowsky, said that in his travels through North Carolina he was often queried by farmers—the question prefaced by the preamble "We had a big argument at the prayer meeting"—with the anxious expectation that the retailer could, should, and would issue a divine ruling.[957] Peddler-turned-cotton dealer Lazarus Straus of Georgia, according to his son, "was much sought by the ministers of the various denominations" for bible interpretation and translation.[958]

Likewise, watchmaker Joseph Jonas was a

curiosity in the Cincinnati area. There is an anecdote of an old woman who asked him:

> "Are you really and truly a Jew—a descendant of Abraham?" When the watchmaker had answered that he was, she folded her hands and lifted her eyes to Heaven and said: "How can I thank Thee, O Lord, that I have lived to see one of the descendants of Abraham before my death!"[959]

Peddler Sam Kalin recounted how he and his family would sit with his Christian customers in the local church, where they "were glad to have us" and where the preacher "would turn towards us and point us out as the 'people of the book' or 'descendants of the prophets.'"[960]

Blacks throughout the rural countryside were especially respectful of the Jews' religiosity and faith. A peddler recalls that one Black farmer said to his family, "Now you all listen closely to the real words used by God coming sure enough from one of his chosen people." One account has a Black man appealing to the peddler:

> "Please, Mr. Sam take it out.…Let us hear them words....Say somethin' holy....Read to us…" Sam then took out his prayer book and began praying in Hebrew accompanied by a discordant chorus of "amens" and "hallelulahs."

Later, when back on the trail, Sam explained to his young Jewish apprentice, *"Maschugenah goyim* (crazy Gentiles), they buy more if they think you are a personal friend of the prophets."[961]

By the turn of the twentieth century, some Blacks began to question the holiness of these retail "prophets" and the role they were playing in their everyday lives. When told that a peddler was a bona fide "Child of Abraham," a "negro mammy" was said to have exclaimed:

> That's no Child of Israel, as he claims to be. That's the same old Jewish peddler that sold me those [shoddy goods]. Such a low-down white man as that *never* belonged to the Land of Canaan [Holy Land].[962]

This deceptive image of the American Jew as the lineal descendant of the "People of the Book" lasted well into the 20th century. Writer Eli N. Evans' father was the mayor of Durham, North Carolina, between 1951 and 1963, and he recalls that Christians would say, "'Y'all listen to the mayor because he's the same religion as Jesus,' and people would perk up, I mean really perk up..."[963]

Trinkets & Baubles

Howard University dean Kelly Miller watched how Jewish merchants treated his people and felt helpless to stop their exploitation. He believed they looked "upon the Negro as an easy field" for their "cheap, shoddy goods, which by artistic arrangement and handling" they made "look attractive."

One drug store that "set out to capture their trade" did so "by means of bright pink ice cream." The proprietor's success was indicated by the fact that his was the only store "in which Negroes may be seen just standing around and not buying. Elsewhere, they are prompt about tending to their

business and leaving without delay." On one Saturday the drug store sold 1,400 ice cream cones.[964]

Try On Clothing

In some Jewish clothing stores Blacks could try on certain items not meant for white trade, a practice that was theretofore unheard of. These cheaply made items would not be offered for sale to white customers (except surreptitiously perhaps), so "there was never the slightest suspicion" that "a Negro had tried … on [an item of clothing sold to whites]." The Jewish merchant had to walk a fine line, however; for vigilant whites (which included other Jews) shared a fear that "the foreigner will lack sufficient resiliency in his resistance to the negro."[965]

Hebrew Helper: Use of Black & White Clerks

Jewish merchants sometimes employed a Black clerk, according to Dollard,

> to initiate business with members of his own race; but, as soon as the clientele grows so that there is a respectable income in it, he will be replaced by a white man.[966]

This racial hiring as a sales strategy also applied to Jewish stores in the northern ghettos as well as in the rural South. Similarly, these merchants further wove themselves into the social fabric of white Gentile society with the judicious employment of Christian white women to work the retail counters. There were several advantages to

this method: they could pay a Gentile woman less than they would a relative; she would never expect to become a partner (as a relative would); and though well trained in the business, she would never be able to amass enough capital to become a competitor. In addition, she handled any problems that cropped up with the overwhelmingly Gentile male clientele, who deferred to her in their customary Southern reverence for white womanhood, thereby allowing the merchant to never have to confront directly his Gentile patrons over the sensitive matter of money.[967]

The experience of the great civil rights activist Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, of Mississippi, reveals another potent force at work in the Black–Jewish retail dynamic. Storekeeper Ben Sklar wanted to collect on a bounced check of one of his customers. As he remembered it:

> I said to her, "Fannie Lou, when you get through shopping, come to the back of the store. I have a favor I want you to do for me." I said, "Fannie Lou, you know who this is. I need you to help me get my $225." She said she'd call me in thirty minutes. Within the thirty minutes, she called me and said, "You can cash that check now. It'll go through this time."

Sklar, who disagreed with Hamer's "philosophy of the NAACP," had nonetheless recruited her—*his customer*—to perform the highly unusual role of collector of his debts. Implicit in this arrangement was that her own relationship with the store might suffer if she refused or failed to collect Sklar's money from a customer unrelated to Hamer, but whom she "knows." Her immediate response to Sklar's "back of the store" request suggests that

Hamer felt obligated to comply and that his request may not have been unusual. The use of Black customers to *police* one another on behalf of the country store merchant may have been another obligation of the dependent Black consumer.[968]

And once the Jewish merchants relaxed the Jim Crow laws long enough to capture the "negro trade" and nursed themselves and their families to economic stability and even prosperity on "negro money," their progressive impulses eluded them and they were known to enforce the Jim Crow laws with vigor, even excluding Blacks from their "upgraded" establishments. According to Dr. Clive Webb, "The more established Jews became as businessmen, the less able or willing they were to sustain an open relationship with black customers."[969]

Webb points out that "[w]here Jewish storeowners in black neighbourhoods might employ black sales clerks," by the time the mom-and-pop store had grown into a large retail establishment, "there was no such sign of them on the sales floors of southern department stores." The Jewish Pizitz family owned a major department store in Birmingham that by 1937 had grown to 74 departments and 750 employees. But "There were no black employees in selling," admitted Richard Pizitz, son of the magnate; "they were essentially in housekeeping, restaurants and back functions."[970] One Black man reported that as late as the era of the Civil Rights Movement,

> I don't remember there ever being Black bathrooms in the department stores. There were not Black bathrooms in Rich's, or Davison's, or Kress.[971]

Blacks as "sitting ducks"

Despite the tremendous decline in illiteracy[972] that took place in the South after the Civil War, a large segment of the Black population remained untutored in the process and methods of trade. According to scholar William Hamilton Harris, the ex-slaves' innocence in business affairs made them "easy prey for quick-counting clerks who kept account books in local furnishing stores." Furthermore, the laws giving white men total power meant that those Blacks who might protest did so pointlessly, even putting themselves and their families in physical danger. One observer characterized the merchant's line of work as "an occupation in which total ignorance had to compete with panoplied intelligence"; it was a vocation that commenced "a system of usury, unrivalled by the Jews of Lombardy of ancient times."[973]

Whites universally wanted to promote the idea that Blacks were irresponsible with money so that they could justify stiff laws designed to undermine Black economic development. As one Jewish family believed, Blacks "needed money no more than turtles."[974] Other testimony about the Black–Jewish retail dynamic points to the slavery-bred financial illiteracy and naïveté of Blacks, who it was alleged spent money irresponsibly:

> The chief customers are the negroes, who delight in spending their money as soon as they get it, and who are not particular as to the quality or quantity or price of the article they wish to purchase...[975]

In another instance it was said that "they never stop buying until their money is exhausted."[976] Account books studied at the University of

Mississippi revealed that, on the contrary, the ex-slaves were remarkably frugal in their purchases and spent sparingly on items of necessity.[977]

And whereas Blacks—having long been actual merchandise, not consumers—did in fact suffer from an enforced inexperience in economic matters,[978] Jewish merchants and peddlers were most often found aggressively exploiting this weakness, not helping to correct this slavery-bred deficiency. Add to this the fact that, by design, there was a marked scarcity of banks or educational institutions that could encourage saving and investment or otherwise manage the economic education of the ex-slave.

Further, much of the Black population bore an air of hopelessness that fostered a sense of carelessness about money and the future. A critical function of the Ku Klux Klan was to instill in Blacks the absolute belief that whatever money, land, or property they had—indeed, their very lives—could simply be taken from them, wherever, whenever, and however whites chose to do so.[979] Every stratum of Southern society considered this grand larceny of Black wealth a legitimate means of racial management. When the Jewish-owned Moses Brothers Bank of Montgomery, Alabama, failed, the savings of "hundreds of negro depositors" amounting to as much as half a million dollars were simply "swept away." Blacks were left "gazing wistfully" at the locked doors, with no legal recourse.[980] So, *by design*, there was no incentive for Blacks to keep, save, or invest money, or even to expect a future other than as a penniless laborer legally locked down on a white man's plantation.

Jews were a highly organized and literate people with centuries of uninterrupted history and knowledge of international trade.[981] *They* would

also add that their people received divine revelation from the Almighty to be a "covenant people, a light unto the nations."[982] None of this "light" was shone on the Black ex-slave of the Deep South. The Jews he encountered saw Blacks as nothing more than a business opportunity—ex-merchandise consuming new merchandise.

A generation after "emancipation," New Orleans Rabbi Max Heller testified to what he called the "business mentality" of some in his flock:

> [H]e buys in the cheapest market not only goods, but men, workers of whose necessities he takes advantage to pay them the least money for the most labor.[983]

The rabbi then lamented:

> He is not an edifying spectacle, the modern business Jew. I speak the unsparing yet measured language of the truth when I say that the Jew of today stands among worshippers of mammon in the front rank.[984]

The Merchant–Landlord Collusion

A widely practiced credit scheme was one in which the peddler and the landowner worked in concert to trap the Black farmers on the land. The peddler extended credit for his merchandise to the Black farmers as long as their landlord guaranteed payment. When the payments came due, the landlord happily paid for any of his tenants that had come up short. According to a Georgia peddler who engaged in these financial arrangements:

> We sell to the *schwartzers* and help them using *goyische gelt* (Gentile [landlord's] money). The *schwartzers* are happy because they can get what they need. The *goyim* are happy because everyone is happy; and we are happy because we have more business![985]

The chief aim of white landowners was to keep the productive Black farm workers from leaving their property, and after slavery the manipulation of debt was the best device they had.[986] The peddler's control over the supply and cost of necessities pushed the tenant into oppressive credit arrangements. And if the peddler cooperated with the planter, the tenant could easily find himself in debt bondage. According to Louisiana law, for instance, if a worker owed money to a planter, he could not move off the planter's land until the debt was paid. This law essentially forced the plantation laborer into neo-slavery, or peonage.[987]

Historian Louis Schmier admitted that "the simple truth" of these arrangements was that the peddler "had betrayed" the unsuspecting Black farmers, for they "were worse off for having placed their trust in him." Schmier reports that many Jewish merchants actively sought to entrap Black Southerners by these arrangements. According to one account, the Jewish peddlers

> would congregate at the local turpentine and lumber mills on pay day and collectively sell to the black workers on credit….*Some of the peddlers did not care about the consequences of indebting the black workers to their bosses*. Others, however, felt somewhat guilty about this practice, but rationalized that if they did

> not do it someone else would. Still others were convinced they were in some way helping the blacks.[988]

By these retail sleight-of-hand techniques, even those Blacks who had learned to be thrifty in a culture that promoted reckless spending and discouraged financial prudence were just as easily separated from their savings. White sociologist Carl Kelsey tells of "an old Negro woman" intent on saving her meager yearly earnings of $125, until she came upon the advice of "a friend":

> It developed that as she went down the street a Jewess invited her to come in and have a cup of coffee. The invitation was accepted and during the conversation she was advised to spend the money. This she did, and when the transactions were over the woman had one barrel of flour, one hundred pounds of meat, ten dollars or so worth of cheap jewelry, some candy and other incidentals and no money.[989]

The Jewish social anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker studied the phenomenon and reported that there was no guarantee that thrifty Blacks "would not be cheated if they did try to spend prudently or even to save for a time of need."[990]

"Scrips" from the Country Store

One profitable business tactic employed by the country store merchant in plantation regions was to arrange with the landowners to have their Black tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and workers paid in

"tickets" or "scrips" (or what would today be known as *coupons*) that could only be used for purchases at that merchant's store. Sometimes the store was owned by the landlord himself, effectively recreating the plantation environment, where Blacks were confined to a single geographical setting. And ironically, according to Dr. Clive Webb, when the Gentile planter owned the store,

> Such a system was designed purely to enhance the planter's profits, but it was a system, [it was] alleged…, *that was still infinitely preferable to the unfortunate sharecropper falling into the hands of a Jew.*[991]

As discussed previously, Bernard Lemann set up a store like this on his own Louisiana plantation and engineered a system to ensure that any "wages" he paid his Black "employees" never left his property.[992] Lemann did not pay in cash but only extended credit to the amount shown on "work slips" so that the workers were forced to purchase undoubtedly overpriced and inferior goods intended for the "negro market."[993] This gave Lemann a monopoly on Black finances and prohibited Blacks from choosing how to spend their own money or from saving any amount of hard cash. Through these creative financial entanglements, wily plantation owners and merchants were able to continue the slave system far beyond its legal end.[994]

Blacks under Lemann's neo-slavery were literally a "captive market." Jewish merchants across the South routinely set up some species of this slave-making feudal system. One such operation in the New Orleans area was run by store owner Emanuel Meyer.[995]

The Mississippi representative of the Freedmen's Bureau was referring to this and other unscrupulous business methods when he estimated that "two-thirds of the Negroes were cheated out of their wages" by white employers, many of whom worked in partnership with local peddlers and merchants.[996]

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937 Hellwig, "Black Images of Jews," 217.

938 This is not to say that these and other methods were used *solely* by Jewish merchants. Jewish merchants were, by far, the most aggressive in pursuing the "negro trade" and were the most visible and ubiquitous retail presence throughout the Black South as well as in the Black urban North. See the description of the racial retail environment in the Southern country stores in Hale, *Making Whiteness,* 168-79.

939 Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, 129; Golden, *Our Southern Landsman*, 158, 162.

940 Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 273. Jews catering to "negro trade" were not the only ones to judiciously bend Southern racial codes. Italians, Greeks, and Chinese who established their own retail stores were known to accord Black customers a measure of respect. See Clive Webb, "The Lynching of Sicilian Immigrants in the American South, 1886-1910," *American Nineteenth Century History* 3, no. 1 (spring 2002): 57; Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers," 65; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (1955; reprint, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1988), 169. A Jewish drugstore in one city was said to have taken Black business from a Black druggist because the Jews were "masters in the art of dealing with their customers." See Edwards, *The Southern Urban Negro as a Consumer*, 142.

941 "Alabama: 'Nigger Day' in a Country Town," *NYT*, 30 Nov. 1874, 1. The correspondent does not specifically ascribe this practice exclusively to Jewish retailers. Nevertheless, his oblique references to "Northern men" and dry-goods stores serving the Black farming populations (Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, 120-22) make this report significant in the Black–Jewish commercial relationship. See also Trautmann, *Travels on the Lower Mississippi*, 203.

942 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 115.

943 Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 354-55; Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, 129-30; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 114.

944 George S. Bush, *An American Harvest: The Story of Weil Brothers–Cotton* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982), 59; Harold Cruse, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual: A Historical Analysis of the Failure of Black Leadership* (New York: Quill, 1984), 477.

945 Oscar R. Williams, Jr., "Historical Impressions of Black-Jewish Relations Prior to World War II," *Negro History Bulletin* 40, no. 4 (1977): 728-29. See also Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 107.

946 Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, 129.

947 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 102; Patrick Q. Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," *SJH* 8 (2005): 102.

948 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 41; Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer*, 42-44; Harry Golden, interview by Sol Littman, in *Harry Golden on Anti-Semitism, Jews, Christians, Race Relations, Negroes, Whites, Civil Rights, States Rights, the South, the North, Social Action, and Some Other Matters* (New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1966), 28; Lenora E. Berson, *The Negroes and the Jews* (New York: Random House, 1971), 16-18.

949 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 6. For an ancient reference to this idea see Isaac Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949), 102.

950 Schmier, *Reflections of Southern Jewry*, 8; Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 44.

951 Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 336; Hellwig, "Black Images of Jews," 205-10; Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*, 357; Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro* (1899; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 369-70; Eric Foner, "Rights and the Constitution in Black Life During the Civil War and Reconstruction," *JAH* 74, no. 3 (Dec. 1987): 876. Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks: A Travel Guide and History*, vol. 2 (New York: Fleet Press, 1979), 191-92: "[T]he blacks, and poor whites saw in the Jewish peddler a living link to the Hebrews of the Bible and they loved to hear him read from the Bible." Yvonne DeCarlo Newsome, "A House Divided: Conflict and Cooperation in African American–Jewish Relations" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern Univ., 1991), 66. For examples, see Robert G. Athearn, *In Search of Canaan: Black Migration to Kansas, 1879-80* (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1978), 5, 178, 234, 235, 254; Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 2000), 33.

952 Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends*, 117. One ad placed by a Jewish store in Durham, N.C., promised, "Quick sales and small prophets [*sic*]." Leonard Rogoff, *Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2001), 29.

953 Emphasis ours. Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 50. Whereas many Jewish merchants used the "holy people" *shtick* as a stratagem to enhance profits, some Jews actually appear to have believed in it themselves. See Chris Monaco, "A Sugar Utopia on the Florida Frontier: Moses Elias Levy's Pilgrimage Plantation," *SJH* 5 (2002): 119; Mel Young, ed., *Last Order of the Lost Cause: The Civil War Memoirs of a Jewish Family from the "Old South"* (Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 1995), 283-84.

954 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 102-3.

955 Joseph L. Morrison, "A Southern Philo-Semite: Josephus Daniels of North Carolina," *Judaism* 12, no. 1 (winter 1963): 79.

956 Leonard Dinnerstein, *The Leo Frank Case* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1968), 67-68. Also, Rogoff, *Homelands*, 86.

957 Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (New York: Simon &

Schuster, Touchstone, 1976), 78.

958 Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 293-94.

959 Ann Deborah Michael, "The Origins of the Jewish Community of Cincinnati, 1817-1860," *Cincinnati Historical Society Bulletin* 30, nos. 3-4 (fall-winter 1972): 156.

960 Schmier, "Hellooo! Peddler Man! Hellooo!" 84; Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010), 145-48.

961 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 45-46. Schmier says that "[t]his scene proved to be the rule rather than the exception." See also Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 102, who refers to this tactic as though it were a common method of Jewish peddlers.

962 Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 274; Louis R. Harlan, "Booker T. Washington's Discovery of Jews," in *Region, Race, and Reconstruction,* eds. J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982), 273-74. Editors' note: The Black woman's words were originally rendered in "negro dialect," as translated by a white folklorist:

> dat's no Chillen o' Israel. Dat's de same ol' Jew peddler wa't sole me dem pisen, brass yearring las' 'tracted meetin' time. Sich low down w'ite mad as dat, he nevah b'long to no Lan' 'o Cainyan.

This use of phonetic spelling to represent the words of Black people is employed when whites want to suggest to their readers Black intellectual inferiority. Thus, the perfectly correct phrase "going to work," becomes "gwine to wuck," "understand" becomes "onderstand," "that" becomes "dat," and so on. The white recorders of the words of other whites—no matter the dialect or the level of grammar—gratuitously rehabilitate their comments to reflect the King's English, thereby preserving their white racial integrity. A slave narrative recorded by a white correspondent provides an example of this technique. The Black man is talking about his experience under a Jewish slave-master:

> I wus borned in Mississippi, so dey tells me, den I wus sold ter Mr. Moses Mordecai of Raleigh….Marse Moses had overseers what beat you fer nothin'….Marse Moses 'ud beat you an' cuss you…

See *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*, ed. George P. Rawick, vol. 15 of *North Carolina Narratives*, part 2, Contributions in Afro-American and African Studies, no. 11 (1941; reprint, Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1972), 407. Also, Myron Berman, *The Last of the Jews?* (Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 1998), passim, esp. 77-78.

963 Eli N. Evans, *The Lonely Days Were Sundays: Reflections of a Jewish Southerner* (Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1993), 33; also, David Goldfield, "Sense of Place: Blacks, Jews, and White Gentiles in

the American South," *Southern Cultures* 3, no. 1 (1997): 73-74.

964 Shankman, "Friend or Foe?" 113; Powdermaker, *After Freedom*, 8, 10. See also "Alabama: 'Nigger Day' in a Country Town," *NYT*, 30 Nov. 1874, 1.

965 Webb, "The Lynching of Sicilian Immigrants," 57; Whitfield, "Commercial Passions," 354-55; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 111, 113; Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer,* 70-73.

966 Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, 126; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 112.

967 Henry Marks and Marsha Kass Marks, "Jewish Life in Alabama: The Formative Stages," *Alabama Heritage,* Spring 1995, 12; Rogoff, *Homelands*, 82.

968 Kay Mills, *This Little Light of Mine: The Life of Fannie Lou Hamer* (New York: Dutton, 1993), 18-19.

969 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 106; Hellwig, "Black Images of Jews," 215.

970 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 126. It is no wonder, Webb observed, that "Jewish businessmen…would face the brunt of African-Americans['] demands for an end to the evils of segregation." Ibid., 128. Also Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers," 71-72. In Savannah, for instance, the employment of a Black salesperson by a Jewish merchant was interpreted as "a great drawing card for Negro trade." Ibid., 63.

971 Ron Netsky, "'Jump Jim Crow': Out of the Segregated South: Oral Histories from the Great Migration," parts 1 and 2, *Rochester City Newspaper*, May 29, 2002, http://www.rochester-citynews.com. Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers," 71-72: Many Jewish businessmen practiced "blatant segregationism." In 1938, the Mobile, Alabama, NAACP had to negotiate with store owner Berney L. Strauss for the provision of a rest room for Black women and children. He appeared sympathetic, agreed to install the facilities, and then reneged. Ibid., 73-74. Webb, "A Tangled Web," 194-95. See the photograph of Mrs. Ruth Tinsley (aged 58) being dragged away from Thalhimers department store in Richmond, Virginia, in 1960, at "The Civil Rights Movement in Virginia: Introduction," Virginia Historical Society, 2004, http://www.vahistorical.org/civilrights/introduction.htm.

972 Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, 356: The time allowed for the education of Blacks in most cotton-producing counties was half the number of days provided for white children; 69 percent of white children attended school, but only 37 percent of Blacks did so. Only five percent of whites were entirely illiterate in 1910; nearly a third of Blacks were.

973 William H. Harris, *The Harder We Run: Black Workers since the Civil War* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982), 14-15; John C. Willis, *Forgotten Time: The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta After the Civil War* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 2000), 27; Horace Mann Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama: A Study in Cotton and Steel* (1939; reprint, New York: Octagon Books, 1969), 121.

974 "Niggers plants de cotton/ Niggers picks it out/ White man pockets money / Niggers does without." See Cobb, *David L. Cohn*,

174; Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi,* 62-65.

975 Frances Butler Leigh, *Ten Years on a Georgia Plantation Since the War* (1883; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 303.

976 "Alabama: 'Nigger Day' in a Country Town," *NYT*, 30 Nov. 1874, 1.

977 Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi*, 67ff.

978 In fact, it is still largely true today and provides some of the most potent proof that Blacks still suffer the effects of slavery well over a century later. See "Forged in Blood: Black Wealth Injustice in the United States," chap. 3 in *The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide*, by Meizhu Lui et al. (New York: New Press, 2006), 73-130, and passim.

979 See for example Waters, *On Jordan's Stormy Banks*, 195. See other testimony in Norman R. Yetman, ed., *Voices From Slavery* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970), 29, 38, 47, 65, 68, 75, 80-81, 96-97, 101, 110, 114-15, 129, 132, 147, 162, 191, 197, 220, 223, 231, 254, 289-90, 293, 303-4, 315, 318-19, 333, 335.

980 "A Bank's Doors Closed," *AC,* 7 July 1891, 1.

981 Ginzberg, "Jews in the American Economy," 113; Jonathan Israel, "Diasporas Jewish and non-Jewish and the World Maritime Empires," in *Diaspora Entrepreneurial Networks: Four Centuries of History,* eds. Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, Gelina Harlaftis, and Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 2-26 (slave trade referred to on pp. 11-12, 13, 19, 20-21).

982 See the related scriptures in the Holy Bible: Genesis 12:2-3, 17:1-14; Exodus 19:5-6, 24:3-8, 31:14-16; Leviticus 18:26, 29, 19:2, 33-37; Numbers 15:29-31; Deuteronomy 5:1-21, 6:1-3, 7:6-9, 9:11; and Isaiah 42:6, 60:3. Also, Matthew 5:15; Luke 11:33; Mark 4:21.

983 Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl'," 101. Blackburn cites the *Jewish Ledger*, 19 March 1897.

984 Blackburn, "'In the Midst of the Whirl'," 102. Blackburn cites the *Jewish Ledger,* 7 March 1895. In an earlier time, Rabbi David Einhorn expressed similar views. See Gershon Greenberg, "The Significance of America in David Einhorn's Conception on History," *AJHQ* 63 (Dec. 1973): 163. *Mammon* is the Mishnaic Hebrew and Aramaic term for "riches" or "money." The word itself is used in the Sermon on the Mount: "Ye can not serve God and mammon." Matt. 6:24. A similar sentiment was expressed by Baltimore's Orthodox rabbi Bernard Illowy. See Stanton, "At One with the Majority," 152.

985 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 51-52.

986 Debt was important to the growth of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. For instance, the Colonial Debts Act of 1732, passed by the British parliament, gave the government the ability to enforce the collection of private debts owed by colonial plantation owners. This increased the market for African slaves, for the law enabled "safe" business investment in slave-based enterprises. See Gavin Wright, *Slavery and American Economic Development* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2006), 6.

987 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 51-54. On the abuses of the debt peonage system as it functioned in

the South, see Pete Daniel, *The Shadow of Slavery: Peonage in the South, 1901-1969* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972), 3-42. "Peonage infected the South like a cancer, eating away at the economic freedom of blacks, driving the poor whites to work harder in order to compete with virtual slave labor, and preserving the class structure inherited from slavery days." Ibid., 11. Also, Pete Daniel, "The Metamorphosis of Slavery, 1865-1900," *JAH* 66, no. 1 (Jan. 1979): 89, 93, 96ff; George K. Holmes, "The Peons of the South," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 4 (Sept. 1893): 265-74; W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Rural South," *Publications of the American Statistical Association* 13, no. 97 (March 1912): 81-82. See Harris, *The Harder We Run*, 13. In 1917, the U.S. Supreme Court declared peonage laws unconstitutional, but did little to enforce its ruling. "Thus, well into the twentieth century, southern landowners continued to hold workers against their will, extracting from them enormous physical and psychological toil."

988 Schmier, "For Him the 'Schwartzers' Couldn't Do Enough," 53, 52-53 n. 9. Emphasis ours.

989 Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer*, 57.

990 Powdermaker, *After Freedom,* 77. Also, Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 121-24ff.

991 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 107-8. For examples, Trautmann, *Travels on the Lower Mississippi,* 74, 203-4. William F. Holmes shows where terrorists known as "whitecappers" specifically forbade this kind of merchant–landlord arrangement, because it confined Blacks to a single plantation and thereby monopolized the local Black labor. See his "Whitecapping," 250 and passim. Also, see Powell, *New Masters*, 87-93; Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, 78-79; Thompson, "Country Stores," 55; Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), 323-24.

992 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 106; Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews,* 53. The urban factories also ran these types of operations, known as company stores. The employees of Jewish industrialist Jacob Elsas "claimed that they were underpaid, and that extortionate sums were exacted from them for rent and the necessities they were forced to buy at the company store." See "Industrial Commission Hears Plain Talk From Labor Men," *AC,* 21 March 1900, 7.

993 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 91, 87; Jacqueline P. Bull, "The General Merchant in the Economic History of the New South," *JSoHis* 18, no. 1 (Feb. 1952): 54. Also Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer*, 58-59.

994 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 87, 90, 83. See also a description of this system (known in England as the truck system) in Trautmann, *Travels on the Lower Mississippi*, 203-4.

995 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 84-85, 162.

996 Eaton, *The Waning of the Old South Civilization*, 157.

The Sharecropper & the Crop Lien: The Moneylender on the Roof

An ought's an ought
/ And a figger's a
figger /
All for the white
man / And none for
the nigger.[997]

—Black
folk
rhyme

Mark Twain, the literary icon of Deep Southern culture, acknowledged the nature of the Black–Jewish relationship. As he saw it,

> In the Cotton States, after the war, the simple and ignorant Negroes made the crops for the white planter on shares. The Jew came down in force, set up shop on the plantation, supplied all the Negro's wants on credit, and at the end of the season was proprietor of the Negro's share of the present crop and of part of the share of his next one. Before long, the whites detested the Jew, and it is doubtful if the Negro loved him.[998]

In this simple observation Twain broadly outlined a hidden historical reality—one that has completely eluded nearly every published work on the Black–Jewish relationship. It is now essential that we examine the framework of this Southern

phenomenon and its effect on the futures of both people.

After the Civil War a very fortuitous development in the world of finance made the American South the prime world market for the age-old Jewish occupation of moneylending.[999] The federal government had passed the National Bank Act (1864), which prohibited banks from mortgage lending and thereby discouraged them from operating in the South as they had before the war. This severely restricted an already tight money flow to the South, but it also opened up an opportunity for the general store merchant to secure a virtual monopoly on credit lending to the farmers throughout the region.[1000] As Twain suggested, merchants, peddlers, and other moneylenders immediately descended into the void and reaped the bountiful harvest of cash-strapped planters and small farmers in desperate need of their services.[1001] Robert Somers described the conditions he found in 1871:

> [T]he opening thus made is occupied by Jewish storekeepers, mostly young men pushed forward by an unseen force in the large cities, and operating with great power over the plantations...[1002]

This is where the newly emancipated Blacks slammed into a brick wall on their way toward true freedom—a barrier erected in no small part by this new breed of Southern Jewish merchant. In fact, the debt traps that afflict many poor Americans today have direct roots in the moneylending schemes established and perfected by exploitative merchants in the post-slavery plantation South. The present-day 400 percent interest “payday” loans, the extortionate credit card multi-charges, the “easy

pay" loans, the subprime mortgages with ballooning interest rates, and the home equity loan swindles—all designed to ensnare the working poor—have their origins in the aggressive, unregulated targeting of the newly freed Black man and woman in the Deep South.

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997 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 313. "Ought" here means zero. Another version ends "figure belongs to me/and the aught to the poor nigger." Painter, *Exodusters*, 66; Joel Williamson, *After Slavery: The Negro in South Carolina During Reconstruction, 1861-1877* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1965), 175.

998 Mark Twain, *Concerning the Jews* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 1985), 18-19, originally published as the article "Concerning the Jews," *Harper's Magazine*, Sept. 1898. Twain's very next paragraph offers historical context:

> The Jew is being legislated out of Russia. The reason is not concealed. The movement was instituted because the Christian peasant and villager stood no chance against his commercial abilities. He was always ready to lend money on a crop and sell vodka and other necessaries of life on credit while the crop was growing. When settlement day came, he owned the crop; and next year or year after, he owned the farm, like Joseph.

See also Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses*, 5, 8. See also "Mark Twain—His Opinion About Jews," *American Israelite*, 25 June 1914, 1.

999 Historically, Jews were always the prominent moneylenders in Europe. They were said to have been barred from other occupations and thus "forced" into moneylending, but when such restrictions were removed (or even non-existent, such as in the Muslim world), Jews still largely chose to remain in the field. See a brief discussion in Meir Tamari, *"With All Your Possessions": Jewish Ethics and Economic Life* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 165-69. Also, it is difficult for Blacks to assimilate the concept that the "hated" Jews would be "forced" to handle the money and commerce of the very people who hate them. For example, in 1960s Birmingham, Blacks seeking basic human rights were met with police dogs and water cannons—not offers of management jobs at white banks. The fact is, Christians were forbidden from engaging in *usury*—not banking or finance. Jews had no such restriction on employing the practice. See Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: HarperCollins, 1987), 172-74. Also, see "Moneylending" entry in the *EJ* (1972), 12:243-55; Roth, "The Economic History of the Jews," 131: "The Jew was the classic money-lender of the Middle Ages, and the classic profession of the medieval Jew was money-lending." The *JEncy* (1903), s.v. "commerce," says that "Jewish commercial activity was…generally restricted to usury and petty trading…" Also see MacDonald and

Gastmann, *A History of Credit and Power*, 41-42, 46-48.

1000 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 646, 651; Theodore Saloutos, "Southern Agriculture and the Problems of Readjustment, 1865-1877," *Agricultural History* 30, no. 2 (April 1956): 64, 65-66; Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, 93; Thomas D. Clark, "In the Southern Retail Trade After 1865," *Journal of Economic History* (Dec. 1943): 40.

1001 Larry Schweikart, "Private Bankers in the Antebellum South," *Southern Studies* 25, no. 2 (summer 1986): 127; Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 41; Bull, "The General Merchant," 37-59; LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry,* 99 [quoting Thomas D. Clark, "The Post–Civil War Economy in the South," *AJHQ* 55 (June 1966), 168]: The furnishing merchants "helped to 'channelize an enormous amount of extra-regional capital into the South.'"

1002 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 240-41. See also Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 121.

The Root of Post-Slavery Black Poverty

[O]ne of the strangest contractual relationships in the history of finance.

—Ernst von Hesse-Wartegg on the crop-lien system

Upon "emancipation" in 1863, as many as two million Blacks in the South were impressively experienced in the techniques of farming and agriculture. Their knowledge of crop production far exceeded that of the average white man, and in this purely farm-based economy their labor was—without question—the most valuable commodity in the entire Southern part of the United States. Without Blacks as tillers of the soil, land of whatever size and whatever fertility was utterly worthless, and even its market value reflected this reality. The price for land was based more on the population of Blacks on or near the land than on any other factor—the more Blacks, the higher the land's market value.[1003] Frederick Trautmann's observations confirm the centrality of these racial and economic realities to the shaping of Reconstruction policy in the South:

> [P]lanters and landowners opposed [Black out-migration] in every way possible. They leveled threat upon threat at steamboat captains: *Do not take black passengers*. Planters with guns appeared at landings and drove away blacks, and at stations kept them off trains….Whites in the [Louisiana] parish had vowed to "shoot on the spot any '*nigger*' about to leave." Armed, they occupied every steamboat landing nearby, allowing no Negro aboard.[1004]

Whites also understood that any Blacks who owned land would gain the full benefit of their own labor *and* the enhanced value of their Black-occupied real estate, which would include the full value of the agricultural produce. All this wealth had previously been in the hands of the white slave-owner/cotton factor. Blacks now had the potential to quickly become totally independent of white control, actually reversing the 300-year racial *and* economic power dynamics in America. In addition to this extraordinary set of circumstances was the promise that in the new political environment Blacks would have the same voting rights that white citizens had. Blacks, who represented more than half of the population in many Southern sections, would very likely vote in solid, unified blocs—for Black candidates—and would potentially vote themselves the full spectrum of Constitutional power.[1005]

The potential of a complete power shift from white to Black—in the epicenter of America's cotton-based economy—simply terrified whites. They could accept no other option but that of Blacks remaining on the cotton plantations as common laborers—*never* as landowners, voters,

merchants or politicians, or even as American citizens. Consequently, before newly freed Blacks could organize that potential, whites engaged in a concerted effort to maneuver them into an economic corner. Through a poisonous mixture of state and federal legislation, government-sponsored terrorism, and legally sanctioned economic trickery on a grand scale, whites developed a close facsimile of the old slave system such that a Black man, in the words of two experts in the field, was "systematically denied the opportunity to become an independent farmer *because of his race*."[1006]

W.E.B. Du Bois captured the dominant mentality of the ruling race after Lincoln "freed the slaves":

> [N]ot a single Southern legislature believed free Negro labor was possible without a system of restrictions that took all its freedom away; there was scarcely a white man in the South who did not honestly regard Emancipation as a crime, and its practical nullification as a duty.[1007]

The "system" was called *sharecropping*, wherein Black farmers became rent-paying tenants on a white man's plantation. Whites made land ownership by the Black ex-slaves virtually unachievable and the ownership rates across the South reflected the success of that strategy:

> In Mississippi, in seventeen counties, not one in one hundred Black laborers owned either house or land; in twelve other counties, not one in twenty; and elsewhere, often not one in fifty….In Louisiana, the results were dismally similar...[1008]

In some of the most populous areas of the Delta, Blacks were so discouraged from ownership that years passed without a single Black purchase of land.[1009] One white man observed that "the feeling against any ownership of the soil by negroes is so strong, that the man who should sell small tracts to them would be in actual danger."[1010] Consequently, renting under the worst possible terms became the only available option for most newly freed Blacks in the South. The Black sharecropper would cultivate a small portion (or share) of his landlord's property, usually lots of between 15 and 50 acres, and pay rent to the often-absentee landlord, who owned spreads as large as thousands of acres. These sharecroppers usually had to pay half to two-thirds of their yearly crop to the landlord for the privilege.[1011]

But the critical foundation of this scheme was the enactment of *crop-lien laws,* which gave the local merchants, many of whom were Jewish, a powerful role in enforcing this new form of Black slavery.[1012] The sharecropper needed supplies such as mules, tools, and seed, along with the common necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter, for himself and his family in order to get started in farming.[1013] Because of the seasonal rhythms of agriculture, these items were in highest demand by the farmer when his cash reserve was at its lowest. Under the terms of the lien laws the merchant supplied these staples to the sharecropper *on credit* but took collateral in the form of the sharecropper's future crop. The novel aspect of the lien system was that the lien-holding merchant gained legal title to something that actually did not exist at the time—the *future* crop—but not to the land the sharecropper farmed. This made each sharecropper legally responsible for the crop he raised and left the white landowner free and clear. It legally tied

the Black man directly to the merchant, who, according to law, was due his cut even before the landlord took his. The terms were clearly designed for entrapment, as one scholar pointed out:

> The seeker of credit usually pledged an unplanted crop to pay for a loan of unstipulated amount at a rate of interest to be determined by the creditor.[1014]

Soon the merchant supplanted the landowner as the prime authority in the lives of the sharecroppers. Jeopardy was effectively doubled when the merchant and the planter were one and the same.[1015]

Additionally, these liens normally required that the sharecropper pledge any other personal or real property he might own, such as his horses, cattle, mules and hogs, his carts and wagons, his household and kitchen furnishings, and even his children's schoolbooks.[1016] And once this collateral was pledged, the sharecropper was in effect barred from dealing with any other merchant for his supplies and restricted to that merchant alone for the handling of his harvest even if a better price for his crop could be found elsewhere.[1017] The laws were designed to "bind the farmer to a single merchant"—just as the slave used to be bound to a single planter—and give the merchant unlimited access to *all* the farmer's meager assets.[1018]

The Black "cropper" alone had to meet the obligation to produce a sufficient crop that would pay all the mounting bills, and the merchant or the landlord had no comparable liabilities in this arrangement.[1019] The weather, the soil conditions, the fluctuations of crop prices, sickness of a family member—all were entirely the burden of the

cropper. Most farmers under this system quickly found themselves hopelessly in debt. Nine out of ten Black households were headed by an adult male, but some men, desperate for a living wage, braved the laws that bound them to a single employer and sought better opportunities in the cities. Nevertheless, even if they could find work to pay off the growing debt, they often returned to legal trouble for having "deserted" their obligations on the plantation.[1020]

1003 Elliott, *Cotton is King,* 887-88, 892. According to the noted *Washington Tribune* editor Whitelaw Reid:

> It was always, however, an important consideration that the former slaves should all be on the plantation. Here, as elsewhere, labor was the great desideratum. That secured, speculators were ready to pay almost any price for the use of the land.

See his *After the War: A Tour of the Southern States, 1865-1866* (1866; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 480-81; Theodore Saloutos, *Farmer Movements in the South, 1865-1933* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1964), 19. Also, Gavin Wright, "The Strange Career of the New Southern Economic History," *Reviews in American History* 10, no. 4 (Dec. 1982): 168; Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 11-12. One post–Civil War official complained bitterly that the emancipation of each slave was equal to the loss of "more than fifty acres, or eighty acres of land and a mule thrown in." See Thomas Wagstaff, "Call Your Old Master—'Master': Southern Political Leaders and Negro Labor During Presidential Reconstruction," *Labor History* 10, no. 3 (summer 1969): 323-24. In 1897, the average price of land per acre in the United States was $6.87; in the Black Belt South, $10.56 per acre, the value of land in that area rising at a faster rate than in any other region. See Samuel W. Goode, "Turning to the South," *AC*, 6 June 1897, 3; Wright, *Slavery and American Economic Development*, 69-71, passim.

1004 Trautmann, *Travels on the Lower Mississippi*, 103-6; Oscar Zeichner, "The Transition from Slave to Free Agricultural Labor in the Southern States," *Agricultural History* 13, no. 1 (Jan. 1939): 26-27; Jennifer Roback, "Southern Labor Law in the Jim Crow Era: Exploitative or Competitive?" *University of Chicago Law Review* 51, no. 4 (autumn 1984): 1178-80; Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 172. White leaders strenuously argued in Congress against the removal and colonization of Blacks, claiming that "to deprive the country of so large a portion of its producing population would be ruinous to its prosperity." Blacks were called "indispensable." See *Congressional Globe*, 11 Dec. 1862, 77; Nathaniel Weyl and William Marina, *American Statesmen on Slavery and the Negro* (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1971), 268.

See also The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, *The Fall of America* (Chicago: Muhammad's Temple of Islam No. 2, 1973), 78. One northern newspaper argued bitterly against Black lynchings in the South:

> The revengeful and short-sighted man-hunters may succeed in driving the negroes…from their borders, and then they will wonder why they do not prosper industrially and commercially.

See "What the Press and People Say about the Lynchings in Georgia," *AC*, 25 April 1899, 3.

1005 According to Otken, *The Ills of the South,* 4: "On election day he came to vote, not as an individual, but in companies of fifty, one hundred, two hundred strong…and without breaking ranks, each man waited with patience for the time to deposit a vote for his [candidate]." The value of enslaved Africans as investment *collateral* was another extraordinary benefit whites lost upon "emancipation."

1006 Emphasis theirs. Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, "The Ex-Slave in the Post-Bellum South: A Study of the Economic Impact of Racism in a Market Environment," *Journal of Economic History* 33, no. 1 (March 1973): 144.

1007 W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903; reprint, New York: Gramercy Books, 1994), 30-31.

1008 Jay R. Mandle, "Sharecropping and the Plantation Economy in the United States South," in *Sharecropping and Sharecroppers,* ed. T. J. Byres (London: Frank Cass, 1983), 122-23; Painter, *Exodusters*, 68.

1009 Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 127. In 1875, Blacks were believed to hold two to four million acres of land. By 1880 that number increased to six million; eight million by 1890, and twelve million by 1900. These numbers are often used to show "progress" of Blacks, even though an untold number of these Black landholders were locked in near peonage, in debt-inducing contracts that guaranteed that the lien-holding merchant skimmed off the profits, leaving the "owner" with both the debt and the deed. The cooperative effort to control the sale of land to undesirable outsiders is discussed in Gregory C. Chirichigno, *Debt-Slavery in Israel and the Ancient Near East,* Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 141 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 47-49.

1010 Whitelaw Reid quoted in Ransom, *Conflict and Compromise*, 229, and 247-49. See an exception in Eric Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 160-61. See also a description in chapter 4 of *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow,* by Neil R. McMillen (Champaign: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1989).

1011 Painter, *Exodusters*, 55, 57.

1012 For a general overview of the circumstances leading to the creation of the crop-lien system, see Gerald David Jaynes, *Branches Without Roots: Genesis of the Black Working Class in the American South, 1862–1882* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986) and Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure*, 3-88. And it must be remembered that the land, and all its value, was morally and

rightfully the property of the Black ex-slave and the Native American. Nevertheless, the three entities least deserving of it—the former Confederates, the slaveholders, and the just-arriving white immigrants—obtained title solely because of their white skin.

1013 There are slight differences in the definition of a "tenant farmer" and that of a "sharecropper," mostly relating to who was responsible for providing the farming implements. The result for both —desperate poverty and everlasting indebtedness—negates the technicalities. See Howard Kester, *Revolt Among the Sharecroppers* (1936; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1969), 22ff, 36-37. Also, ibid., 37: "Their diet consists mainly of cornbread and molasses. Rarely does one find a cotton farmer who has sufficient clothes to keep his body warm and comfortable. If he becomes ill and has money he can pay a doctor; if not, he can die." Zeichner, "The Transition from Slave to Free Agricultural Labor," 27: "Not only were food rations often of the cheapest sort, but they were also rather scanty."

1014 C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1951), 180ff.

1015 Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure*, 58ff; Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, 77ff.

1016 Ransom and Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom,* 123; Painter, *Exodusters*, 60. Also, Harold D. Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," in *Black Southerners and the Law, 1865-1900,* ed. Donald G. Nieman (New York: Garland, 1994), 460. Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure*, 59, referred to these so-called *Anaconda mortgages*, "which forced the owner to back up his crop lien with everything he owned..." See "Negro Farm Tenants," *AC*, 4 Nov. 1891, 9: "If there is one tenant in this section [Fort Valley, Georgia] who has not had everything in his possession levied on from one to three times, I have not been able to locate him." For an overview of the lives of sharecroppers see Margaret Pace Farmer, "Furnishing Merchants and Sharecroppers in Pike County, Alabama," *Alabama Review* 23 (April 1970): 143-51.

1017 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 653-64. According to Ransom and Sutch, "[T]he enactment of crop lien laws…permitted the merchant to legally enforce such contracts."

1018 An example of an 1876 crop-lien contract is in Ransom and Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom,* 124; and an 1882 contract is in Joseph D. Reid, Jr., "Sharecropping As An Understandable Market Response: The Post-Bellum South," *Journal of Economic History* 33, no. 1 (March 1973): 128-30. Also, W. E. B. DuBois, "The Rural South," *Publications of the American Statistical Association* 13, no. 97 (March 1912): 82-83. There is one written in 1888 by Jewish merchants of Alabama, the Weil Brothers, in *An American Harvest: The Story of Weil Brothers–Cotton,* by George S. Bush (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982), 70. Dr. Painter (*Exodusters*, p. 57) presents the 1878 contract of Louisiana farmer Orange Pucket, who rented twenty-five acres of land. The contract required that *his wife and children also work in the field with him* and that he be charged ten bales of cotton: five bales for rent, two for the renting of two mules, two more bales for their feed, and one bale for the rental of tools. Additionally, Painter says

(p. 61), the sharecropper was responsible for paying lawyer fees amounting to ten times the rate in other parts of the country. See also Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 120-25. For the treatment of sharecroppers under these contracts, see Zeichner, "The Transition from Slave to Free Agricultural Labor."

1019 Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 374; Harold D. Woodman, "Class, Race, Politics, and the Modernization of the Postbellum South," *JSoHis* 63, no. 1 (Feb. 1997): 21-22.

1020 Gerald D. Jaynes, "Blacks in the Economy from Reconstruction to World War I," in *Upon These Shores: Themes in the African-American Experience, 1600 to the Present*, eds. William R. Scott and William G. Shade (New York: Routledge, 2000), 173; Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," 462-63; Stephen David Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2000), 86. Also, under the ancient Jewish laws governing slavery, it was understood that "[t]he possession of land was a basic factor in being able to retain control over one's family." See Christopher J. H. Wright, *God's People in God's Land: Family, Land, and Property in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1990), 255-56, 256 n. 49.

Lien on Me: Abuses Rampant

The money-lenders—often Jews—came into possession of many plantations. By the crop lien and blanket mortgage the negro became an industrial serf.

—
Walter L. Fleming, *American Journal of Sociology*, 1905

According to Ransom and Sutch, "Sharecropping allowed the exploitation of the small farmer by the monopolistic financial structure dominated by the local merchant." And the ratio of sharecroppers to merchant was extraordinary. According to Mississippi Baptist minister Charles H. Otken, a harsh critic of the crop-lien system, "About 300 farmers are, on an average, at the mercy of one man."[1021] Historian Joe Gray Taylor compared the lot of the sharecropper to that of "any medieval serf." He explains,

> Emancipation had not brought real freedom; it had put him on an economic

> treadmill; he and his descendants worked hard to stay in the same place for three generations.[1022]

Thus, the landlord and the merchant acted as Southern society's enforcement mechanism that ensured that the sharecropper was forever locked into plantation labor. He was never allowed to generate enough revenue to pay off his debt, thereby keeping him "legally" enslaved year after year. The profits that just one cotton-growing sharecropper could generate every year far, far exceeded any "debt" he could ever incur, but because the merchants controlled the marketing process, only a tiny fraction of the wealth his labor generated ever made it back to him. The aim of the merchant and the landlord (and they often were one and the same) was to keep *someone* farming the land, and that was the only consideration when his crop was tallied at harvest time. Anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker reported that one couple who sharecropped for fourteen years cleared money only three times: $50, $60, $110. The $110 they made working for one of the rare Black landowners, "who let them sell their own crop."[1023]

Even more remarkable was that the merchant exercised the ultimate control, reserving the right to choose what crop the farmer could grow. Usually, he demanded that cotton be the only crop grown, given its ease of handling and storage, lack of spoilage, and international market demand.[1024] And there was yet another nefarious advantage to having this one-crop requirement. According to scholars Ransom and Sutch,

> the merchants were able to coerce their customers into excessive production of cotton in order to reap the profits of

selling foodstuffs to the farmer.[1025]

The terms of the liens blocked crop diversification, removed incentives for improving agricultural methods, and virtually eliminated the ability of Black communities to grow their own food; for any crops raised, even for the family's subsistence, could be confiscated under the terms of the lien.[1026] Whereas Black farmers traditionally saw their land as a diversified source of their family's self-sufficiency, as had been the African and Indian farming philosophy for thousands of years, the pressures of the one-crop lien system (designed to fill the *world's* demand for cotton) ruled out the utopian dream of full Black independence.[1027] If Black farmers practiced self-sufficiency, writes Wayne K. Durrill,

> There would be no cotton for [merchants] to buy, insure, ship to New York, and sell for enormous profits as there had been before the war. Moreover, freedmen who ceased to produce a significant cash crop would have no money on hand to buy cloth and shoes from Northern factories. They would begin to produce those goods at home and the merchant's import trade would falter.[1028]

Thus, Black self-sufficiency was engineered out of the equation and cotton dependency was reinforced. At harvest time the merchant required that the cotton be processed and pressed into bales at his cotton gin and press for an exorbitant and non-negotiable fee. Once baled, the sharecropper could not freely sell his own product for the best price; instead, he was forced to turn it over to the

merchant at whatever price the merchant chose to pay. This price was figured against all other credit purchases made throughout the year by the sharecropper at the inflated "credit price." The result, almost invariably, was that the Black sharecropper would come out *owing money to the merchant*—by the merchant's own mysterious calculations.[1029]

Those Black farmers who were able to attain land ownership were still tied to these crop-lien arrangements. Often they were not in a position to negotiate terms more favorable than those that entrapped the sharecropper.[1030] If the farmer failed in his obligation, the merchant had a legal right simply to take the land and disburse it as he saw fit.[1031]

And Blacks came to the merchants with far fewer resources and far more disabilities than the white farmers. Blacks had to support themselves on fewer acres with fewer work animals per acre, fewer farm implements, and less fertilizer—and had to labor under terms stricter than those for whites. Their farms, on average, were many times smaller than the average white farm.[1032] They were more prone to debilitating sickness and were often farming the worst land,[1033] with the poorest quality tools and work animals. If it appeared that the Black sharecropper might fail to make the crop, the merchant could order the Black man's wife and children into the fields; if he was still not satisfied, he could have the sheriff seize the crop and sell it to pay the debt.[1034] Some contracts required that the cropper perform tasks for the landowner outside the acreage he rented. Tasks such as fencing, land clearing, road building, and other functions to improve the owner's property were demanded of the renter.[1035]

Many Black sharecroppers faced incidents like the one that confronted this unfortunate couple:

> They raised three and a half bales of cotton and some corn. The landlord took all the cotton and half the corn and when it was time for the settlement said he would make it later. They do not know how much the cotton was sold for. The tenant stored his half of the corn in his house. One day in December he came home and saw the employer's wagon standing there. He found the lock on the door broken and the landlord inside with another man, taking the corn. They took all but three or four bags. The tenant remarked that he had already given his corn. The landlord answered that he was taking more. The tenant could do nothing but stand aside and let him take it.[1036]

Unable to diversify to spread the risk, or extricate themselves from the usurious terms of the crop-lien contracts, Black farmers were left vulnerable to devastating loss based on a single factor such as bad weather, pest infestation, or a price fluctuation, which could, and often did, destroy their meager savings. United States Agricultural Department official George K. Holmes, writing of merchants generally, concluded that "The merchants, who advance plantation supplies, *have replaced the former masters* and have made peons of them and of their former slaves."[1037] When cotton dropped from 31 cents a pound in 1866 to 9 cents in 1886 and 6 cents in 1893, many Black farmers were virtually wiped out, their land taken as collateral by the lien-holding merchant.[1038]

1021 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 642; Otken, *The Ills of the South,* 25. Elsewhere (p. 48) he says, "Five hundred men tied up to do business with one man!"

1022 Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 403; J.T. Trowbridge, *The South: A Tour of Its Battlefields and Ruined Cities* (1866; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1969), 366; Michael Schwartz, "The Dynamics of Change in Southern Farm Tenancy," chap. 4 in *Radical Protest and Social Structure: The Southern Farmers' Alliance and Cotton Tenancy, 1880-1890* (New York: Academic Press, 1976), 57-71. See also *Library Magazine,* December 1880, 187.

1023 Powdermaker, *After Freedom*, 94.

1024 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 655-57; Holmes, "Peons of the South," 266-67; Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 325. As a consequence of soil depletion resulting from the one-crop system, merchants added fertilizer as another highly lucrative source of income, sometimes taking a separate "fertilizer lien" along with other liens. The pressure of debt disallowed the age-old farming practice of leaving the fields fallow to avoid over-cultivation. See Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 325-28; Williamson, *After Slavery*, 169, 172; and Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 124. The one-crop stipulation survives today in the loan arrangements made by international bankers like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in their dealings with "third world" countries. See, for instance, the operating philosophy of these organizations as expressed by John Perkins in his book *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2005), xi, xvii.

1025 *Force* and *coercion* seem to be the key descriptors. Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 665 and passim. "It was much easier for storekeepers to keep track of their debtors if they were *forced* to grow a single staple crop." (Emphasis ours) See Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 323. "To guarantee the credit they received, they were *forced* to put more and more of their acres into a money crop, usually cotton, and into corn to feed their families and their animals." (Emphasis ours) See Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 382. Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 325: "merchants sinned greatly by *forcing* upon the South its unfortunate one-crop system." (Emphasis ours) Also, Hammond, "The Southern Farmer and the Cotton Question," 463; Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, 83.

1026 Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 404; Du Bois, "The Negro Landholder of Georgia," *Bulletin of the Department of Labor*, no. 35 (July 1901): 669. Also, according to one scholar, "The word 'crops' as used in verbal or written contracts has particular reference to cotton and corn." See Thomas J. Edwards, "The Tenant System and Some Changes Since Emancipation," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 49 (Sept. 1913): 40; Rupert B. Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture: A Study in the Social Geography of the American South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1929), 179-92; Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy,* 87.

1027 Painter, *Exodusters*, 67. Author Michael Wayne wrote that the intention of the local merchant was to "maneuver the freedman into

a state of material dependence that effectively reduced his opportunities in the marketplace." See his *Reshaping of Plantation Society*, 150-51; Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 325; Woodman, "The Decline of Cotton Factorage," 1235-36.

1028 See Durrill, "The South Carolina Black Code," 5. For instance, Lincoln County, Georgia, residents used the excuse of "negro crime" in a petition demanding that their "neighbors" stop buying cotton from Black sharecroppers without the permission of their landlord. This was to disguise their real aim, which was to cripple Black commercial initiatives. "Georgia News Notes," *AC,* 8 Sept. 1890, 4.

1029 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 642; Charles Spurgeon Johnson, *The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1935), 25-32.

1030 Powdermaker, *After Freedom*, 94. According to the 1900 census, 8 percent of all farms in the five cotton states were owned by Blacks, representing 6.5% of the land, though they represented more than half the population. See Sutch and Ransom, "The Ex-Slave in the Post-Bellum South," 137; Williamson, *After Slavery*, 167. Woodman, "Class, Race, Politics," 21-22, points out that by 1900, Black landowners operated 188,269 of the South's farms, the number of Black owner-operated farms rising by 16.7 percent to 219,667 in the following decade. But Du Bois ["The Negro Landholder of Georgia," *Bulletin of the Dept. of Labor* (1901)] shows

> that black landowners held tiny plots, some so small they could not possibly support a family. Many had to have nonfarm work or, more likely, work as wage laborers and croppers on plantations to earn enough to support themselves and their families.

Also, many unspoken and unwritten stipulations were attached to Black land ownership. According to Arthur F. Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1933), 83-84: "[T]heir security in ownership, was and is contingent upon their being…punctiliously servile to the whites and find no fault with existing educational, social, political, and economic conditions." Also, Powell, *New Masters*, 131.

1031 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 655; Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," 447-65.

1032 Sutch and Ransom, "The Ex-Slave in the Post-Bellum South," 142, 140: "White farms had, on the average, four times as much untilled land as blacks." W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Negro American Family*, Atlanta University Publications, no. 13 (Atlanta, GA: Atlanta Univ. Press, 1908), 105-6.

1033 Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer*, 26-27; Nate Shaw and Theodore Rosengarten, *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw* (New York: Knopf, 1974), 102.

1034 Edwards, "The Tenant System," 41; Higgs, *Competition and Coercion*, 56. See also Booker T. Washington to George Washington Cable, 8 October 1889, *The Booker T. Washington Papers*, vol. 3 (1974; reprint, Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2000), 8:

> If a farmer has 6 in a family say wife and 4 children, the

> merchant has it in his power to feed only those who work and sometimes he says to the farmer if he sends his children to school no rations can be drawn for them while they are attending school.

Also, Hammond, "The Southern Farmer and the Cotton Question," 462. Hammond points out that this credit system "is much less prevalent in communities settled chiefly by whites." Williamson, *After Slavery*, 167. Shaw and Rosengarten, *All God's Dangers,* 189, show that a merchant will offer different prices for the same bale of cotton depending on the race of the farmer, with whites, of course, getting a higher price.

1035 Mandle, "Sharecropping and the Plantation Economy," 123; Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure*, 32.

1036 Powdermaker, *After Freedom,* 94. The accumulation of wealth by Blacks was prohibited by Jim Crow culture and by law—a direct holdover from slavery, during which the "carrying [of] money without the proper identification" was specifically forbidden—a legal proscription enforced by Jews. See Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans,* 171. Also, Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South,* 86-89.

1037 Emphasis ours. Holmes, "The Peons of the South," 267.

1038 Carl N. Degler, *Out of Our Past: The Forces That Shaped Modern America* (New York: Harper, 1959), 198-99; Jack Abramowitz, "The Negro in the Agrarian Revolt," *Agricultural History* 24, no. 2 (April 1950): 89. See also a description in Cohn, *The Life and Times of King Cotton*, 162-68; William F. Holmes, "Whitecapping: Anti-Semitism in the Populist Era," *AJHQ* 63, no. 3 (March 1974): 246-48; and Walter L. Fleming, "Reorganization of the Industrial System in Alabama After the Civil War," *American Journal of Sociology* 10, no. 4 (Jan. 1905): 499; Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, 358-59.

The Black–Jewish Collision in the Cotton Fields

**And they covet
fields, and take them
by violence; and
houses, and take
them away: so they
oppress a man and
his house, even a
man and his
heritage.**

—

Micah
2:2

The South's Black ex-slaves, friendless, unschooled, and penniless, having only their farming skills to bargain with, were immediately sucked into the merchant's credit vortex. The widespread enforced illiteracy of the Black man and woman (Black schools were routinely burned to the ground) conspired with the well-honed skill of the merchant exploiter and the law that backed him to make the entire Black population in the Cotton South little more than open targets.[1039] Whereas the owing of money in America had once been treated as a crime worse than theft or even murder,[1040] now debt became the only available vehicle whereby the ex-slaves could enter society. For most sharecroppers, these crop-lien contracts were the very first "legal" arrangement they entered into as "free" men and women. The destiny of the Black man, formerly in the hands of the plantation master, was now given over to the general store

merchant—who frequently was a Jewish immigrant.[1041] And while Jews were fast approaching unprecedented affluence, for the vast majority of freedpeople, wrote Princeton's Nell Painter, "merely getting out of debt represented an accomplishment."[1042]

Through the crop-lien system the merchant effectively siphoned the value of the land right off the top. Merchants took liens on the farms and soon took the farms. Many held in their safes at the general store dozens of titles on foreclosed land totaling thousands of acres of prime southern farmland. Jewish merchant H. Hiller came into ownership of 400 farms in Mississippi, "most of which he acquired through mortgage foreclosures."[1043] One Jewish scholar boasted of the "success and economic influence of Natchez Jews" by pointing out that

> in 1880, of 1023 chattel mortgage transfers in Adams County, 539, or 52%, were received by Jewish supply houses in Natchez [Mississippi]. And this at a time when the Jewish population was less than 5% of the total![1044]

Thomas D. Clark, in an article published in the leading Jewish history journal, apologetically explained the process:

> It was in this way that many furnishing merchants accumulated large tracts of land.…So prevalent did the custom of giving land as security become that it was common practice in much of the South to speculate on the amount of mortgage every man had on his farm and as to the probable date on which he

> would have either to secure an abundance of providential assistance or be foreclosed.[1045]

Black Mississippi Delta farmer William Toler purchased eighty acres of uncleared land in the 1870s in the hope of establishing an economic foundation for his family. Toler quickly paid off the mortgage and improved the land for cultivation and increased its value dramatically. He sought credit for farm supplies from Greenville cotton merchants Morris Weiss and Nathan Goldstein and within three years Toler owed them $800. That debt doubled within five years, and the merchants held liens on Toler's land, his seven mules, and his future crops. By 1890 his debt approached $2,000, and all the while Toler's cotton was being marketed exclusively by Weiss and Goldstein, who continued to add charges and penalties *on top* of the ten percent interest. Finally, in 1894 Weiss & Goldstein took Toler's land and auctioned it off to the local bank for the full amount of the debt, $2,000. Though the industrious and independent-minded Toler was able to repurchase the land, he was never able to fully overcome the oppressive crop-lien system that claimed so many of the most productive Black farmers in the Reconstruction South.[1046]

Dr. Joe Gray Taylor called the merchant's take "exorbitant," crediting it with "keep[ing] Louisiana agriculture poor…"[1047] "Scarcely a single phase of life," wrote Clark, "was left untouched by the influence of the merchant."[1048] The slang expression "The Man," which Black America once used to describe white authorities, was previously used to describe the furnishing merchant. Margaret Pace Farmer described the everyday life of the sharecroppers in Alabama: If the sharecropper got sick, she wrote, he did not go to the doctor—he

went to "The Man," who arranged for the doctor if *he, the merchant,* thought it necessary. If a death occurred in the sharecropper's family, he did not go directly to the undertaker—"The Man" arranged for the coffin and burial.[1049] Thus, the lives of the Black man and woman were in no way altered from "slavery time." And Blacks remained shackled to "The Man"—Jew and Gentile—long after the physical chains had been outlawed.

1039 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 648, 654-57; Ransom and Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom*, 26-27. William Garrott Brown, "The White Peril: The Immediate Danger of the Negro," *North American Review* 179 (1904), 835: "Yet it is true that many planters, probably a majority, still prefer the negro, and particularly the uneducated negro, both as laborer and as tenant." In 1870, almost 90 percent of all freed slaves were illiterate, and efforts at self-education, no matter how rudimentary, met with violent white resistance. Also, Vernon Lane Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (1947; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 121.

1040 Well into the 19th century, debtors' prisons existed in America. In some states incarcerated debtors were required to supply their own food while in prison alongside thieves, murderers, and other criminals, who were fed and clothed by the state.

1041 Ashkenazi, "Jewish Commercial Interests Between North and South," 204. Harry Golden says, "The Negro's first purchases as a free man were from the peddlers, who by now were mostly German Jews." See his *Forgotten Pioneer*, 33.

1042 Painter, *Exodusters*, 54, 60-61.

1043 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 314, 322; Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy in the South," 432: "His [the merchant's] safe bulged with thousands of liens and mortgages." See Saul Jacob Rubin, *Third to None: The Saga of Savannah Jewry, 1733-1983* (Savannah, 1983), 166. See also Larry Schweikart, "Southern Banks and Economic Growth in the Antebellum Period: A Reassessment," *JSoHis* 53, no. 1 (Feb. 1987), 35: "A substantial number of southern Jews engaged in banking, and their records show strong kinship bonds and interregional ties of ethnicity that add still other divisions to the banking class." ISJL, "Clarksdale, Mississippi"; Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste and Class* (Los Angeles: Univ. of California, Center for Afro-American Studies, 1941), 264:

> The wholesale merchants in [Natchez, Miss.] who once rivaled the banks as credit agencies for planters were, with one exception, Jews. Most of them were socially of the middle class in [Natchez], but a few had risen into the upper class.

Harris, *The Day of the Carpetbagger*, 483ff: "By 1880 an estimated three fourths of the land in the river counties and one half in the upland counties [in Mississippi] were encumbered with liens held by merchants and others…" Holmes, "Whitecapping," 249; Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks,* 2:162-63; Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 113, 178-79. See also the case of Louisiana Jewish merchant Simon Witkowsky discussed in the *American Israelite*, 28 Oct. 1887, 10; Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," 88-90; Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew,* 2:530-31. See ancient parallels in Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East*, 23-27, 99-102, 111; and in Chirichigno, *Debt-Slavery in Israel and the Ancient Near East,* 50-54, 61ff. See Biblical reference in Amos 8:4-7:

> Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat? The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works.

1044 Hoffman, "The Jews of Natchez," 6. For similar activity in France, see Paula E. Hyman, *The Emancipation of the Jews of Alsace: Acculturation and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1991), 13, 16. In 1858, there were 12 Jewish businesses in Natchez; by 1877, there were 28, making up more than half the dry goods and cotton-buying operations. See Jennifer Moses, "The Lost Tribe of Natchez," *NYT*, 20 Sept. 1998, 12, 20.

1045 Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy in the South," 431-32. The American Jewish Historical Society's publication of Clark's article detailing the Jews' central role as merchants in the crop-lien system is significant given that the presence of Jews in the South during this Reconstruction period is often denied. This activity can be shown to have followed an ancient Jewish blueprint in place more than a thousand years before. According to one scholar of the early Jewish society of pre-Islamic Iraq, "Wealthy Jewish landlords took advantage of the problems of small farmers whose property was sold for debts to increase their own estates." See Michael G. Morony, *Iraq After the Muslim Conquest* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1984), 311; also, Rogoff, *Down Home*, 140.

1046 Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 66-68, 176-77, and on the methods of merchants generally, 121-23.

1047 Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 405. Also Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama*, 121. The idea of land value calculated in harvests as opposed to acreage was well established in ancient Talmudic codes. See Roman A. Ohrenstein and Barry Gordon, *Economic Analysis in Talmudic Literature* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1992), 30.

1048 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 313; Robert Preston Brooks, "The Agrarian Revolution in Georgia, 1865–1912," *Bulletin of the*

University of Wisconsin, no. 639 (1914): 33-36. Eli Evans (*The Provincials*, 70) wrote that by the 1880s "the merchants in the farm supply stores held the South in an iron grip of dependency…"

1049 Farmer, "Furnishing Merchants and Sharecroppers," 147, 150.

The Hebrew "Book on the niggers"

The Negro's first purchases as a free man were from the peddlers, who by now were mostly German Jews… [H] is wife wanted a gold wedding band. The peddler sold her the wedding band on credit and put her name in a little ledger book. When he made his rounds to sell and collect, she always asked him to let her see her name in the book. She wanted to see her name on a page of accounts, evidence of human dignity, evidence that she was paying her way.

—Harry Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer*

The abuses associated with the crop-lien system were ingenious and widespread, and the most

diabolical dealings occurred right at the front counter of the country store. Harry Golden's romanticized rendering of this open daylight theft with its happy Black victim obscures the cruelty of this new American slavery, a system in which many Jewish merchants are heavily implicated.

As Golden indicates, Jewish merchants and peddlers were known to keep "little ledger books" filled with hieroglyphic scribble only they could decipher. Charges could be added whenever the merchant wished, and prices for items purchased on credit and the associated interest rates were subject to change every time the store opened. Blacks were particularly vulnerable to this accounting trickery, having no authority to whom they could protest or appeal who was not also beholden to the merchant.[1050] Dr. Thomas D. Clark examined this post-slavery phenomenon, which befuddled him in 1944: "[T]he activities of the bookkeepers were beyond human comprehension…[T]he intricacies of determining interest [were] an unfathomable mystery."[1051]

Robert Somers was also mystified: "How the books on the plantations are kept I do not know."[1052] All merchants engaged in this account book chicanery, but Jewish merchants targeting Black customers seemed to have developed it into a fine art that even had its own terminology —"keeping a book on the *schwartzers* (the Yiddish term for *niggers*)."[1053]

1050 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 642, 654; Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 317, 328. Merchants used symbols for customers' names and for merchandise, or used a system of corn grains and moving pegs on a board. "[P]urchasers studied the strange marks which the merchants had made on tags and barrel heads and wondered what they all meant….The arrangement of the letters and symbols, however, was senseless." Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, 79-80; Degler, *Out of Our Past,* 198-99. See the description in Painter, *Exodusters*, 62-65; Bull, "The General Merchant," 52-55;

Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society*, 172. See an example in Rogoff, *Down Home*, 103. An interesting exception was recorded in Richard Wormser, *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003), 37. Also, on sharecropping, ibid., 36-41; and Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 170-75.

1051 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 315, 317: "Always there was an element of secrecy involved in price quotations." Saloutos, "Southern Agriculture," 72: "The lien system also encouraged dishonest bookkeeping." Otken, *The Ills of the South,* 15-21; Kester, *Revolt Among the Sharecroppers*, 42-43; Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure*, 34-39. Currently, there are similar criticisms of Wall Street firms such as Goldman Sachs, Lehman Bros., and others, whose complex financial instruments not only have confounded investors and regulators alike but have led to the near collapse of the American economy.

1052 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 243. Joel Williamson discusses the "fantastically high mark-ups" of the account books but does not distinguish Jewish merchants, in *After Slavery*, 174-75. Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi*, 71: "Many former sharecroppers considered it laughable to have expected shopkeepers or landowners to have given them receipts." Otken, *The Ills of the South,* 19, quotes a farmer: "The niggers never ask for a bill, and don't get it if they ask for it." Otken adds (p. 20): "Not one merchant in ten thousand would be willing to do business with other merchants in this way." And on p. 52 he asks sardonically: "Why not give the large farming class a lien on the property of merchants to secure fair dealing?"

1053 Golden, *Our Southern Landsman*, 157. Golden insists that "the Jewish peddler performed a great service for the blacks of the South between the years 1900 and 1920." *Schwartzers* is also spelled *schvartzers, shvartses,* or *schwatses*. See also Sorin, *A Time for Building*, 159.

In this Year of Jubilee everyone is to return to his own property. If you sell land to one of your countrymen or buy any from him, do not take advantage of each other….

—The Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:13-17)

This "book on the schwartzers" and its secret debt and payment codes became the method by which the merchants monitored and controlled the day-to-day affairs of the Black sharecropper, keeping "constant surveillance of each farmer's performance."[1054] Its secrecy was reinforced by the probability that most of the nefarious merchant–sharecropper transactions were made orally, leaving no record of the terms.

Prices of items purchased on credit—and that was a substantial percentage of purchases—were inflated far beyond what could be justified, often ranging from 50 to 110 percent.[1055] In some areas the legal rate of interest for a loan was set at about seven or eight percent, but Blacks were often charged twice that rate; and some merchants reportedly charged Blacks 10 percent *per week*.[1056]

Ransom and Sutch reported that interest rates "invariably exceeded 40 percent, and in some instances exceeded 70 percent, per year," even as rates in New York were from 4 to 6 percent.[1057] Clark addressed the issue as well:

> The customer not only paid a published interest charge of twelve and a half percent, but a markup of twenty-five percent and more for credit price plus a profit charge of ten to fifty percent.

It was, he said, "usury in its grossest form."[1058] Joe Gray Taylor found that the interest charged by Louisiana's general stores "was almost astronomical."[1059] In 1882, the *Georgia Herald* estimated that a farmer borrowing $800 would within a 5-year period pay out $2,800—*just in interest.*[1060] Some "justified" this extortion by claiming that Blacks were a credit risk, but the testimony of Jewish peddlers and their stated preference for Blacks as customers show that Blacks were trustworthy and faithful in fulfilling their payment obligations.[1061]

The ubiquitous credit maze was unforgiving, unrelenting, and almost totally unavoidable. Clark wrote that the crop-lien system was devastating to the newly freed Black man, for it soon put him "back in slavery, not to a plantation master, but to a conscienceless counter book."[1062] Black accomodationist leader Booker T. Washington commented in 1889:

> [T]he "mortgage system" has gotten a hold on everything that it seems impossible to shake off. Its evils have grown instead of decreasing, until it is safe to say that 5/6 of the colored

> farmers mortgage their crops every year...After a merchant has "run" a farmer for 5 or 6 years and he does not "pay out" or decides to try mortgaging with another merchant the first merchant in such cases usually "cleans up" the farmer, that is takes everything, mules, cows, plows, chicken's fodder—everything except wife and children.[1063]

Even the white farmers, who at first helped to maintain the system, "began to taste the bitter fruits of economic enslavement"[1064] as merchants applied their financial noose to *all* farmers regardless of race.[1065] One white New York-based publication called *The Judge* printed a caricature of a big-bellied Jewish merchant sporting a crown, sitting atop a cotton bale, holding a whip in one hand and a folder inscribed with the words "Mortgage on Cotton Crop" in the other.[1066]

Robert Somers reported in 1870 that the white planters of Mississippi held a convention in which their chief grievance harked back to the age-old source of European Gentile–Jewish conflicts: "the enormous usury to which they are subjected in the purchase of their supplies and the sale of their produce." Whites formed groups like the Grange and the Farmers' Alliance and sometimes vented their anger in violence. In 1871 a Jewish merchant was murdered at Tigerville, Louisiana. Later a mob of small farmers burned stores at Delhi belonging to men with the Jewish surnames Hirach, Blum, Weil, and Risenfeld.[1067] The *New York Times* article of December 1, 1886, demonstrates the level of animosity directed toward the crop-lien system:

> Mr. Milkowski's buildings have been burned, and his mules driven into the

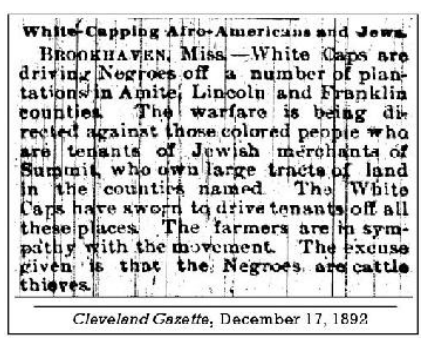
> swamps. His wife and daughter came into Lake Providence to-night, reporting that the rabble had torn down the fences to build fires to destroy the family mansion in Caledonia. Milkowski is a Polish Jew who has lived in the neighborhood 30 years and acquired great wealth. *In the days of bulldozing he led these same people against the negroes and drove out the Republican office holders*. They are all in his debt and are enraged that with their poor cotton crops he has refused further advances, but insists on collecting what they owe him. They murdered his bookkeeper and burned his dwelling to destroy if possible the records of their indebtedness to him. At 9:30 to-day Judge Delaney wired the Governor of the condition of things, and had advised Milkowski to get up a volunteer posse and capture the assassins if possible, but Milkowski says they will kill him sure if he attempts it.[1068]

The fact is that Black sharecroppers who were tenants on land held by Jews endured the physical violence, even though the terrorists were targeting the *business* of the sharecroppers' Jewish landlord. Mississippi Jewish merchant H. Hiller became the focus of "whitecappers" in 1892. They burned the homes of 27 of Hiller's Black tenants and drove all the others away; the Black tenant farmers lost their homes, their livelihoods, and (though there is no mention of the casualties) possibly their lives. Hiller was not threatened with physical violence, and although his *tenant* houses were burned, his *land* was not taken, as property invariably was taken when the targets of whitecap terror were Black. A

local newspaper reported that one Black man was subjected to "unusual, indeed revolting brutality. Some of its details are unfit to be put in print." Hiller was unable to get renters, so he sold his interest in the land and was thus compensated for his loss. A Jewish historical journal admitted that the violence was the result of the "rage and frustration" felt by white farmers who believed they were "victims of an unjust credit system…that drove them to commit their crimes." Once again, Blacks became the scapegoat caught in the crossfire of Jewish–Gentile Caucasian conflict.[1069]

By 1894, agrarian reformers like the embittered Charles Otken condemned the crop-lien system without reservation, charging that its

> tremendous evils and exorbitant exactions have brought poverty and bankruptcy to thousands of families…. [I]t has crushed out all independence and reduced its victims to a coarse species of servile slavery….[I]t is cruel in its deception and in its demands.[1070]



White-Capping Afro-Americans and Jews.

BROOKHAVEN, Miss.—White Caps are driving Negroes off a number of plantations in Amite, Lincoln and Franklin counties. The warfare is being directed against those colored people who are tenants of Jewish merchants of Summit, who own large tracts of land in the counties named. The White Caps have sworn to drive tenants off all these places. The farmers are in sympathy with the movement. The excuse given is that the Negroes are cattle thieves.

Cleveland Gazette, December 17, 1892

Blacks also fought back, forming groups like the Colored Farmers Alliance, which was organized in 1886 and spread to every state in the South. Its

membership reached 1.2 million, 300 thousand of whom were women. In 1889 Oliver Cromwell, an Alliance leader, tried to persuade Black farmers in Leflore County, Mississippi, to do business with an independent cooperative instead of the exploitative local white merchants. The Mississippi whites seeded the countryside with rumors of Cromwell's "criminality." Soon the governor sent three national guard units to Leflore, which joined several hundred whites, who combed the countryside in search of Cromwell, destroying his movement and shooting and lynching twenty Blacks.[1071]

Other reform movements included the interracial political party known as the Populists and organizations such as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and the Alabama Sharecroppers Union. As early as 1865, Black Nationalist Martin Delany even tried to establish a cotton exchange on behalf of the freedmen, whom he saw being horribly exploited by merchants and speculators. The freedmen, said Delany, were the victims of "A deep laid scheme…under the name of legitimate trade…"[1072]

The general thrust of these organizations was both to extricate the Black man from the crop-lien system and to put him on firm footing in a fair and equitable trade relationship directly with the consumers of his product—thus cutting out the lien-holding middleman. Philanthropists like John F. Slater, a Christian white man, set up a fund of $1 million to offer relief from the "Jew money lenders living in the South as store-keepers, [who] cheated the negroes out of their lands…"[1073] Despite these mighty efforts, the damage was too extensive for them to make much of a difference.

1054 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 652; Ransom and Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom,* 122; Edward King, *The Southern States of North*

America (London, 1875), 274.

1055 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 652; Holmes, "The Peons of the South," 267. Leonard Rogoff estimates 100 percent markups in *Down Home*, 26.

1056 Abramowitz, "The Negro in the Agrarian Revolt," 89. Otken, *The Ills of the South,* 50: "rascality has feasted on the opportunity."

1057 See Ransom and Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom,* 130, 387 n. 39. See also Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 404; Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 243-44; Edwards, "The Tenant System," 42-43; Wilson, "Race in Commodity Exchange and Consumption," 592; Williamson, *After Slavery,* 169-70.

1058 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 316; Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 403-4. Generally, merchants were said to "charge from 25 percent to grand larceny." Throughout history Jews were so much identified with the crime of usury that the subject has its own entry in the *JEncy,* 12:388. The Biblical prohibition against usury is in Exodus 22:25 (King James Version):

> If thou lend money to *any of* my people *that is* poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

And Ezekiel 18:13 (New International Version), in which usury is considered a capital crime: "He lends at usury and takes excessive interest. Will such a man live? He will not!" Amazingly, the Jewish Talmud teaches that even though death is prescribed for usurers, there is nonetheless *no obligation to return the money*. See tractate *Baba Mezia* 49b-61b in *The Babylonian Talmud*, pt. 4, *Nezikin*, vol. 1 (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 295ff, 302ff, 327, 335, 337ff, 351, 364ff, 368-69. Tractate *Gittin* (chaps. 4 and 5), however, was seen by Jews to have nullified the Biblical commandments against usury, and one Jewish law (*Baba Mezia*, 335) exempts Jewish purchasers of slaves from the "law of overreaching." See Shemuel Safrai, *The Literature of the Sages*, part 1 (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1987), 164. Usury and other financial crimes are strongly condemned in the Holy Quran: Sura (chapter) 2:275-76, 3:129, 30:39; 4:160-61:

> And for their taking usury—though indeed they were forbidden it—and their devouring the property of people falsely. And We have prepared for the disbelievers from among them a painful chastisement.

See MacDonald and Gastmann, *A History of Credit and Power in the Western World*, 46-47. And for a discussion of Jewish usury in the context of America, see Tenenbaum, *A Credit to Their Community*, 32-36. Meir Tamari reminds us in *"With All Your Possessions,"* 179, that "[t]he injunction against the taking of interest *applies solely to a transaction between two Jews*. It does not apply to non-Jews… [Emphasis ours]." Deuteronomy 23:20 (New International Version) is explicit on this topic and further dictates that the land of the borrower be used to secure the usurious loan:

> You may charge a foreigner interest, but not a brother

> Israelite, so that the LORD your God may bless you in everything you put your hand to in the land you are entering to possess.

1059 Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 404, 405. Taylor says that "[t]he charges were inordinately high…" Wilson, "Race in Commodity Exchange and Consumption," 592, states that interest rates in the South could be from 50 to 125 percent, "at a time when short-term interest rates in New York ranged from 4 percent to 6 percent and never exceeded 8 percent." The Jewish Talmud calculates "overreaching" or "fraud" to have occurred once profit exceeds one sixth of the value. See *The Babylonian Talmud*, pt. 4, *Nezikin*, vol. 1, *Baba Mezia* (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 295-96, 303ff.

1060 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 322; Reid, *After the War*, 482.

1061 Sutch and Ransom, "The Ex-Slave in the Post-Bellum South," 139, 140, 142. See Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 6: "Mr. Davis dealt with poor people and black people on a daily basis….he did extend credit to them and never lost any money." Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 23: "For Jews and non-Jews peddling continued to be a *sure method* of economic advancement." (Emphasis ours)

1062 Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 26-27, 79, 315. On efforts to re-enslave the South's free Blacks, see Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*; Johnson and Roark, *Black Masters*, 259-60; Higgs, *Competition and Coercion*, 74; Jonathan M. Wiener, "Planter–Merchant Conflict in Reconstruction Alabama," *Past and Present* 68 (Aug. 1975): 80-85.

1063 Booker T. Washington to George Washington Cable, 8 October 1889, *The Booker T. Washington Papers*, vol. 3 (1974; reprint, Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2000), 7-9.

1064 See Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 315; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 138.

1065 Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 655. By 1895 a Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry concluded that "the sad plight of the cotton farmers" was caused by high interest rates, tariffs, speculators, indebtedness to merchants, and a money shortage. See Woodman, "Class, Race, Politics," 16; and especially Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," 447-65.

1066 Murray Friedman, *What Went Wrong? The Creation and Collapse of the Black-Jewish Alliance* (New York: Free Press, 1995), page of illustrations facing p. 120.

1067 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 240-41; Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed*, 402; Roger W. Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana: A Social History of White Farmers and Laborers During Slavery and After, 1840–1875* (1939; reprint, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1968), 241; Degler, *Out of Our Past*, 198-99.

1068 Emphasis ours. "Lawlessness in Louisiana," *NYT*, 1 Dec. 1886, 4. Similarly, historian John Higham wrote of how "night-riders burned dozens of farmhouses belonging to Jewish landlords in Southern Mississippi," leaving out the salient fact that these buildings housed Black families—thus recasting a racist assault against Blacks

as an "anti-Semitic" pogrom. See *Strangers in the Land*, 92.

The term "bulldozing" used here is a form of brutalization of Blacks and also has Jewish origins, as explained in "The Policy in the South," *NYT*, 9 July 1877, 5:

> I noticed that he used the word bull-dozeing very frequently [so I asked for an] account of how it originated. He replied that he knew all about it, and that its history was rather amusing. During our troubles up there, said he, and particularly with the cotton-thieves, the citizens formed themselves into a vigilance committee for self-protection. Among us was a worthy Israelite [Jew], whose knowledge of the English language was not as perfect as that of an Ame[r]ican, and, as a [con]sequence, he frequently got things a little mixed. One of the rules of the company was that when a thief was caught he was to have a dozen stripes with a bull-whip. Now, Jacob did not exactly understand what a cowhide or bull whip was, but he did know that the thief was to be genteelly licked. On one occasion a fellow was caught, a few links in the chain of evidence against him were missing, and some of the members were in favor of indicting but half of the law upon him. Jacob, however, was convinced in his own mind that the fellow was guilty, and when it came his turn to pass upon the guilt or innocence of the prisoner, he cried out, "All the law! Bull doozen! bull doozen!" meaning, as a matter of course, a dozen licks with the bull-whip. A great laugh ensued, and the fellow was "bulldozed."…I have little doubt that the above is the true origin of that expression so terror-striking to all "thieves" throughout the State….The negroes were to have the "doze" anyway.

See also Holmes, "Whitecapping," 245.

1069 Holmes, "Whitecapping," 244-61, esp. 249-50, 253; Samuel C. Hyde, *Pistols and Politics: The Dilemma of Democracy in Louisiana's Florida Parishes, 1810-1899* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1996), 208-9; Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks*, 2:163. See also Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," 99-100; Higgs, *Competition and Coercion*, 75-76; Otken, *The Ills of the South,* 41-43. Otken points out that the merchants who owned farmland had a clear advantage over the other white landowners in securing labor and thus were resented and their tenants and laborers terrorized. Jewish merchants Aaron and Israel Weinstein of Lumberton, North Carolina, had a thousand acres of tenant farms. See Rogoff, *Down Home*, 140-41.

1070 Otken, *The Ills of the South,* 10-11; Ransom and Sutch, "Debt Peonage," 641; Ransom and Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom*, 164; Painter, *Exodusters*, 63, 67-68. See also Holmes, "Whitecapping," 247-48. For a discussion of attempts to reform the system in Alabama, see Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, 85-108.

1071 See William F. Holmes, "The Demise of the Colored Farmers'

Alliance," *JSoHis* 41, no. 2 (May 1975): 195-96; Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 128-37.

1072 Victor Ullman, *Martin R. Delany: The Beginnings of Black Nationalism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 374-79.

1073 The Slater Fund was one of several organizations that focused on assisting the ex-slave. Among these organizations were Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Quakers—but no Jews. See the list in Otken's *The Ills of the South,* 217. Also Joe M. Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction: The American Missionary Association and Southern Blacks, 1861–1890* (Athens, GA: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1986); Coulter, *The South During Reconstruction*, 203, 203 n. 49.

A Conversation with Mr. Solomon, Jewish Merchant

**He is a merchant,
the balances of
deceit are in his
hand: he loveth to
oppress.**

—
Hosea
12:7

In Meridian, Mississippi, Robert Somers reported that much of the storekeeping business was conducted by Jews who "make no secret" of their high-interest cotton liens:

> These people are sent down by firms in New York and other large towns…to advance money on cotton at the approach of the picking season at as much interest as they can extort.[1074]

Somers had a revealing discussion with an "ingenuous Jewish trader" in Mississippi named Solomon, who candidly told of the 100 percent markups he charged for staple items. Then, in his Eastern European dialect, as recorded by Somers, he admits to having a large role in the economy of his Mississippi town. He tells Somers that his store is not merely a tiny mom-and-pop catering to the Black cotton pickers; rather, *"De store ish de inside of de plantation."*[1075]

With an air of absolute entitlement, Solomon

talks about how he manages the lives of his Black charges through the power granted to him by the crop-lien system. He tells Somers, for instance, that the "monthly ration of a negro field-hand" is:

- one bushel of corn meal, which Solomon gets for 75 cents, but sells to the Black man for $1.50;
- 16 pounds of bacon, which he gets for 13 cents/lb., but sells to the Black man for 25 cents per pound;
- one gallon of molasses, which he gets for 50 cents, but sells to the Black man for a dollar.

[It should be noted here, and with great emphasis, that Mr. Solomon, an immigrant Jew and private citizen, admits to "rationing" necessities for a presumably "free" people, Blacks. He is not "rationing" for a single Black, but for an entire community of Black farmers of an unknown size. He is of the belief that he has the perfect right to perform this role—even considering it a responsibility. Nowhere in the annals of Jewish American history is there any reference to, or thought of, the "rationing" of necessities or any other commodity to Jewish people as individuals, families, or as a community—much less that Black private citizens might be in charge of it. This systemic racism, built into the very structure and consciousness of American society, is tragically unique to the Black experience in America.[1076]]

Their dialogue continues:

SOMERS: "But, Mr. Solomon, is not 100 percent of retail profit too much?"

SOLOMON: "It ish large profit, but it ish profit in de books, not profit in de pocket."

SOMERS: "How so?"

SOLOMON: "Why, de white planter is very poor, and de negro, who sometimes raises crop for himself, is very idle, and knows no accounts [financially naïve]. He comes to me and says he will raise crop if he is fed and gets clothes, and we say, 'Well, raise crop and we shall see.'"

SOMERS: "And how do you do?"

SOLOMON: "Do? We do great deal. I have three horses riding on saddle—my own one of de best pacers in de country; and when Sunday comes I say to my clerks, 'Go you dis way and dat,' and I go de other, and we see how de work is going on; and if negro is doing nothing we put them all," with a wave of his hand, "outside."[1077]

SOMERS: "Beg your pardon, Mr. Solomon, but what do you mean by putting them all outside?"

SOLOMON: "Outside, ish it?—outside de store, of course. De store ish de inside of de plantation [keeps the plantation running]. If de negro wants bacon or molasses, we give him half de quantity or none, and planter de same. His wife wants silk gown; we give her cotton one or none….[The] black man must eat, and if he not work we put him outside with lien on his crop."

According to Somers, Solomon took liens on cotton, hides, and other farm produce "at prices which enable him to turn them over with another profit in New Orleans or Memphis." Consequently, Somers says, "in two or three years he ought to be very rich."[1078] He continues:

> [His] Dry Goods and Notions Store… flourishes here as elsewhere in the United States, and dispenses its…wares at prices 200 to 300 percent above their real value. A pair of coarse negro boots, one of the cheapest articles in the stores, is charged five dollars. *The Northern manufacturers themselves are sometimes astonished at the retail prices of their goods*

> *in the South*….negro freedmen [are] living or attempting to live in the remotest parts of a vast territory, where the effect of monopolies and artificial restrictions is to bring the article wanted to the poorer consumer at a price to him much more severe.[1079]

1074 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 151.

1075 Ibid., 240-42. The section is titled "Mr. Solomon's Account of his Commercial Relations with the Planters and Negroes." See also Clark, *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*, 318.

1076 Ownby, *American Dreams in Mississippi*, 71; Wilson, "Race in Commodity Exchange and Consumption," 592; Williamson, *After Slavery*, 170-71; Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture*, 73; Schwartz, *Radical Protest and Social Structure*, 31. On merchant rationing, Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer*, 30; Lu Ann Jones, *Mama Learned Us to Work: Farm Women in the New South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2002), 48; Edgar Thompson calls it "stomach discipline," in "Country Stores," 55. Also, Zeichner, "The Transition from Slave to Free Agricultural Labor," 27. On rationing by a Jewish slave-owner see Carter Field, *Bernard Baruch: Park Bench Statesman* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1944), 4. This merchant-rationed "diet" led to widespread malnutrition and disease among sharecroppers, who suffered from malaria, pellagra, and hookworms. Further, the merchant reserved the right to provide rations solely to those in the family that worked in the fields, and not to those children who attended school, a clear disincentive to educate Black children. See *Booker T. Washington Papers*, vol. 3 (1974; reprint, Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2000), 8. On the living conditions of sharecroppers see Gilbert C. Fite, *Cotton Fields No More: Southern Agriculture, 1865-1980* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 1984), 30-47. Another example of rationing is in J. Carlyle Sitterson, "The Transition from Slave to Free Economy on the William J. Minor Plantations," *Agricultural History* 17, no. 4 (Oct. 1943): 221-22.

1077 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 241. These so-called *riders* were little more than overseers—a direct carryover from plantation slavery. If, in this case, they were Solomon's "clerks," then they too were Jewish. See Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer*, 30; LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry,* 223. For the early Talmudic precedent for this, see Rabbi Julius Newman, *The Agricultural Life of the Jews in Babylonia Between the Years 200 C. E. and 500 C. E.* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1932), 42.

1078 Somers, *The Southern States Since the War*, 242.

1079 Emphasis ours. Ibid., 244.

The Purpose of Black Debt

Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.

—

Genesis:
47:23

There was a method to this crop-lien madness. The actual store purchases made over the year by the sharecropper (or, more accurately, the cost of rations) as recorded by the merchant really didn't matter at all, for as long as the victim came out "in debt" the merchant was satisfied. Dr. Nell Painter discusses the 1876 study by Henry Adams, who found a "chronic indebtedness" among Louisiana farmers despite healthy cotton prices and harvests in previous years. Even though the sizes of the families and the farms and the productivity of the lands differed, the annual debt per family was suspiciously uniform. According to Adams,

> Yet they had not had as much as twenty-five to fifty dollars cash money at the end of any one year. That they always, at the owner's mode of settling, [were] in his debt. Yet they did not even have half enough to eat or scarcely anything to

> wear, and their indebtedness never exceeded one hundred and fifty dollars per year on an average per family.[1080]

The debt seemed calculated to be just enough to keep the sharecroppers legally ensnared, but not great enough to cause such overwhelming hopelessness and despair that they abandon the land.[1081] Jonathan Wiener explains how under the sharecropping system, the *hardest-working* and most productive farmers were actually *penalized* by the merchant:

> The merchant who held the tenants' liens for supplies not only obtained a large share of the profit from black tenants' labour; he also had the power to decide which tenants stayed on the plantation, and which were forced off. If a merchant wanted a hard-working or compliant tenant to remain, the account books could show a debt to the store at the close of each year. And the books could be made to balance exactly for those who were to be asked to move on.…The crop lien for supplies thus became a crucial means of acquiring the surplus produced by the freedmen, and, in years of low cotton prices or a poor crop, merchants often had a greater opportunity for making a profit from plantation agriculture than did planters.[1082]

Thus the debt-plagued sharecroppers, as well as the succeeding generations who were required to assume the burden, were locked in bondage to the merchant, who became the law in the lives of his charges. Prof. Clyde Adrian Woods rightly described

the system as "wrapped in violence and fraud," noting that it "was in reality a production system organized around institutionalized starvation, discrimination, violence, fraud, debt and enforced dependency." Blacks "who challenged this year-in and year-out system of exploitation often found themselves or their family members imprisoned, beaten or murdered."[1083]

1080 Painter, *Exodusters*, 59ff. See also Chafe, *Remembering Jim Crow*, 37-38; Holmes, "The Peons of the South," 270-71; Kester, *Revolt Among the Sharecroppers*, 42.

1081 If the cropper wanted to change landlords or merchants, the new one had to pay off the cropper's outstanding debt. Sometimes the new landlord negotiated a discount of this debt, so that a debt of $200 might be satisfied for $100—but then still required his new tenant to pay off the full $200. See The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, *The Fall of America* (Chicago: Muhammad's Temple of Islam No. 2, 1973), 78.

1082 Wiener, "Planter–Merchant Conflict in Reconstruction Alabama," 83. A remarkably similar dynamic existed among the ancient Jews. See Moshe Aberbach, *Labor, Crafts and Commerce in Ancient Israel* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press; Hebrew Univ., 1994), 168-69.

1083 Clyde Adrian Woods, *Development Arrested: The Blues and Plantation Power in the Mississippi Delta* (New York: Verso, 1998), 92-96.

The Talmudic Origins of Sharecropping

That nigger from Shiloh can pick a bale of cotton. That nigger from Shiloh can pick a bale a day.

By 1876, there were 618,000 cotton farms in America, most utilizing the newest form of Black slavery—sharecropping. It is commonly assumed that the sharecropping system developed organically through a random process of post-slavery trial and error. Some believe it emerged from the attempts of the Freedmen's Bureau to redesign a labor system for the new realities of "emancipation." One major author in the field claims that the very term *sharecropper*

> originated in the turpentine forests of North Carolina in the 1830s, where predominantly slave laborers were assigned tasks in sections marked off into grids or "crops."[1084]

Others have suggested that the system resembles the *métayer* agricultural system of southern Europe, and still others claim it was a product of the emancipated former slaves themselves.[1085] In actuality, the framework for this new agricultural design was articulated and practiced long before the 1830s by the ancient forefathers of the very people who benefited the most from slavery's newest incarnation.

The book in the Jewish Talmud known as "Baba Mezia" established elaborate rules for operating an agrarian economy that included sharecropping, credit arrangements, liens, and even the use of slaves. Not only is the economic structure of sharecropping well defined in the ancient Jewish model, but specific discriminations against Gentiles very similar to those sanctioned by the Jim Crow legal system are also built into the system described in the Talmud. According to scholar Dr. Jacob Neusner, "[t]he non-Jew's ownership of property in the land of Israel is not recognized"[1086]—just as with Blacks in the post-slavery South.

In a region like the American South, where all affairs were guided in no small part by religious fervor, the Talmud offered a religiously sanctioned clear and compatible socio-economic design. Dr. Neusner emphatically points out that no religion other than Judaism had devised a full economic system based almost entirely on agriculture. For hundreds of years after Jesus, and throughout the Christianization of the western hemisphere, Christian doctrine stood almost entirely mute on the fundamentals of economics.[1087] But the Talmud explicitly outlines the economic and legal frameworks for a fully operational agrarian society. According to Neusner the early sages of Judaism had developed

> rules governing land use, placement of diverse types of crops, rights of ownership, alongside provision of part of the crop to those whom God had designated as recipients of his [sic] share of the produce….God owns the land, the householder is the *sharecropper*…[1088]

Many of these ancient rabbis were large land

owners who managed slaves *and* tenant farmers and sharecroppers—a strikingly similar arrangement to that established in the American South.[1089] Even the crop liens and usurious credit arrangements that locked Southern Blacks into desperate, generational poverty were identical in every way to the so-called *hubullum* loans pushed onto the peasant farmers by the moneylenders of ancient Israel.[1090]

Second-century rabbi Tarfon taught that wealth itself was determined by the following criterion: "He who possesses a hundred vineyards, a hundred fields and a hundred slaves working in them."[1091] This particular interpretation of wealth had to be considered heaven-sent by the framers of the Southern socio-economic system in the aftermath of the Civil War. Also, the Talmud's hostility toward non-Jews—what Dr. Moshe Aberbach calls its "deeply ingrained prejudices"—offered a sanctified rationale for the racial caste system on which the South is based.[1092]

Add to this the fact that Jews became an integral, even critical, component of the Southern economy, especially after the devastation of the Civil War. The American Jewish Historical Society attributed a transformative role to the Jewish merchant:

> The challenge to these merchants lay not so much in the field of merchandising as in *helping to devise systems* of capitalization and distribution which would work in a bankrupt region.[1093]

The parallels between the sharecropping *system* that developed in Reconstruction America and that which existed in the Jewish society of ancient Babylonia are hard to ignore. And given the sheer

number of Jewish merchants who populated the post-slavery South, it is entirely plausible that their ancient blueprint factored into its economic design. Jewish merchants were clearly the most practiced cartel of plantation suppliers and credit agents; indeed, many had become international cotton dealers and prominent bankers. Consequently, they were more influential in shaping new farm policy than any civic planning commission or regional government authority. The fact is that *finance* would ultimately determine the re-organization of cotton farming. According to Carolyn Gray LeMaster, who studied the Jewish merchant's role in the cotton economy, "it became *the merchant's responsibility* to keep account of crop conditions, growing seasons, reliability of the farmers, and the ability of his customers to purchase merchandise."[1094] That there were features of the system that benefited the merchant only, like the disastrous single-crop requirement, demonstrated his influence in the creation and establishment of the post–Civil War sharecropping/crop-lien system.[1095] Jewish immigrants, with their Talmudic tradition of a well-defined agricultural management system, would certainly have had much to offer in shaping the character of the new Southern economy.

1084 Wright, *Slavery and American Economic Development*, 5.

1085 See Peter Joseph Hamilton, *The Reconstruction Period* (Philadelphia, 1906), 530-31.

1086 Baba Bathra 44a–b, 167b in *The Babylonian Talmud*, pt. 4, *Nezikin*, vol. 2 (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 188-89; Baba Mezia 49b–65a in *The Babylonian Talmud*, pt. 4, *Nezikin,* vol. 1 (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 295-382; *The Code of Maimonides*, book 7, *The Book of Agriculture,* trans. Rabbi Isaac Klein (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1979), 209-13, 383-87; Jacob Neusner, ed., *The Law of Agriculture in the Mishnah and the Tosefta* (Boston: Brill, 2005), 89, 108-11; Aberbach, *Labor, Crafts and Commerce in Ancient Israel*, 42; Morony, *Iraq After the Muslim Conquest*, 311-12.

1087 Jacob Neusner, *Medium and Message in Judaism* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989), 67-68, 75, 97-98; Jacob Neusner, ed., *The*

Economics of the Mishnah (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990), 43-49; Ohrenstein and Gordon, *Economic Analysis in Talmudic Literature*, 14ff.

1088 Jacob Neusner, "Why Does Judaism Have an Economics?" (paper presented in The Inaugural Saul Reinfeld Lecture in Judaic Studies at Connecticut College, New London, Conn., April 1988), 3-4, 9-11, 12, 16, 17, quotation on 16 (emphasis ours); Maria deJ. Ellis, *Agriculture and the State in Ancient Mesopotamia* (Philadelphia: Publications of the Babylonian Fund, 1976), 31, 37-39, 60-71; Heinrich Ewald, *The Antiquities of Israel,* trans. Henry S. Solly (Boston, 1876), 216. A sharecropping system based on the Talmudic model developed in ancient Iraq under Muslim rule. See Frede Lokkegaard, *Islamic Taxation in the Classic Period* (Copenhagen: Branner & Korch, 1950), 172-76.

1089 Newman, *The Agricultural Life of the Jews in Babylonia*, 39-43, 50-61, 161-68, 173. On the use of slaves in Babylonia, ibid., 62-73; and Chirichigno, *Debt-Slavery in Israel and the Ancient Near East,* 50-54. Also Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East*, 107ff. Among the ancient Jews the tenant farmers or sharecroppers —"known under the various names of *muskenu* in Ancient Babylonia, *ikkarati* in Neo-Babylonia, Assyria and Nuzi, *ikkarim* in Palestine, and *hupsu* and *mskbm* in Syria"—were "the mainstay and foundation of Near Eastern agriculture." Ibid., 109.

1090 Chirichigno, *Debt-Slavery in Israel and the Ancient Near East,* 61ff; G.R. Driver and John C. Miles, eds., *The Babylonian Laws: Ancient Codes and Laws of the Near East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 130-50. Deuteronomy 23:20 explicitly permits Jews to engage in usury against non-Jews and dictates that land be used to secure a usurious loan.

1091 Shabbath 25b in *The Babylonian Talmud*, pt. 2, *Mo'ed*, vol. 1 (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 112.

1092 Aberbach, *Labor, Crafts and Commerce in Ancient Israel*, 42, 50-51, 164-77. A brief overview of Jewish involvement in agriculture and sharecropping is in Salo W. Baron et al., *Economic History of the Jews,* ed. Nachum Gross (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), 107-113; also, Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews,* vol. 3 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1957), 30-31.

1093 Emphasis ours. Clark, "The Post–Civil War Economy in the South," 425.

1094 Emphasis ours. LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 98-99; Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 302.

1095 For example see House, *Report of the Industrial Commission on Immigration*, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1901, H. Doc. 184, vol. 15 (Washington, 1901), L-LI; and Hamilton, *The Reconstruction Period*, 530-31.

Blacks and Jews: How Much Did They Make?[1096]

[B]y even rough calculations, the sum total of the worth of all the black labor stolen by whites through the means of legal slavery, legal segregation, and contemporary racial discrimination is truly staggering… perhaps in the range of $5 to $24 trillion.

—Joe R. Feagin, president, American Sociological Association

By the turn of the century New Orleans Jews had publicly and contemptuously asserted that "the Negro forms the mud at [the] base" of civilization.[1097] Blacks were indeed at the base of America, and despite their own desperate economic circumstances they were nonetheless raising from the mud all the products that were generating immense wealth for all the whites and Jews in America. W.E.B. Du Bois assessed the disproportionate importance of the Black farmer to the American economy and found that Blacks in the

South held a third of the farms, a tenth of the acreage and a ninth of the property, but raised 1/5 of the products:

> Colored farmers raised, in 1899, 39.4% of the cotton on their own farms, besides what they raised as laborers on white farms; 9% of the rice, 21% of the sweet potatoes, 10% of the tobacco, and 4% of the corn.[1098]

Of course, Blacks were the vast majority of farm laborers on white farms; but, as we have seen, Blacks did not benefit from the economy they themselves created, drove, and maintained.[1099] By the turn of the nineteenth century, there were 746,717 Black farms with a total acreage the size of New England, yet, almost universally, they were desperately poor and mired in debt. Only a quarter of them (187,799) were actually *owned* by Black farmers. The credit schemes of Southern merchants were said to have drained $75 million from farmers in just one year of overcharges. In today's dollars that equals $2.9 billion.[1100] A United States commission was told in 1899 that the lot of agricultural laborers was "wretchedly poor" and that their annual earnings amounted to a meager $225 (equivalent to $6,000 today). But this may have been far too optimistic. A federal survey a decade later found that annual compensation to laborers was less than seventy-nine dollars.[1101] Dr. Du Bois concluded that fully three-quarters of the wages due Black farmers since the Civil War were simply stolen from them.[1102]

At the same time, an unprecedented amount of money was being made at the other end of the scale on the ten million bales that Blacks were producing annually.[1103] By their own strategic planning, the

communal networks of Jewish merchants set the price of cotton, ordered the amount grown, marketed the seed, fertilizer, mules, tools, and equipment, provided the financing and credit, and then carried off the bales by the tens of thousands to the port city markets around the South—many of them dominated by still other Jewish cotton-traders. Add to these advantages the obvious benefits to Jewish families of obtaining all their food and supplies at wholesale rather than retail prices. As peddlers and proprietors of thousands of country stores selling all manner of goods at substantial markups they were able to reduce their actual cost of living to far below that which their Gentile customers were spending. There can be little doubt that these expansive Jewish trading networks benefited Jewish immigrants by allowing them to obtain goods "at cost" for everyone in their tight-knit communities.

In *The Ills of the South*, Charles Otken points out that no other occupation generated so much wealth in this era as that of Southern country store merchant. According to Jonathan M. Wiener:

> Both the wealth and the number of black-belt merchants increased sharply between 1860 and 1870, and merchant wealth expanded most precisely in… land. While the holdings of all other groups of landowners, rich and poor, were declining in value, the value of merchants' holdings was increasing. The total value of land owned by all residents of the county declined by 61 per cent between 1860 and 1870…but the total value of real estate owned by county merchants actually increased by 24 per cent.[1104]

The new merchant-driven economy set an unfortunate precedent that has had a deleterious and long-lasting effect on American society as a whole. The class of learned professionals whose occupations require years of costly education or technical training, such as doctor, lawyer, clergyman, educator, craftsman, artisan, government official, and others, constituted a distinctly lower class in their supporting role to the farmer (who was yet subservient to the merchant) in the Southern agrarian economy. The new thriving merchant class, on the other hand, appeared in force with no more than a credit line from the family business, an inventory of northern manufactures, and a cash register—and in short order a considerable share of the Black Belt's riches poured into the merchant's overflowing country store coffers.[1105]

And thus an unholy Black–Jewish union was formed—a shotgun relationship reinforced by the powers of a cotton-hungry nation and a cotton-hungry world—that yielded clear and distinct economic rewards for Jews and just-as-clear disadvantages for Blacks.

1096 Sources include Painter, "The Economics of Oppression," chap. 5 in *Exodusters*, 54-68. Also, several attempts were made to calculate the budgets and expenses of Southern farmers after the Civil War. They include Robert Higgs, "The Fruits of Their Labors," chap. 5 in *Competition and Coercion: Blacks in the American Economy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), 95-117; and Robert E. Park, "Negro Home Life and Standards of Living," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 49 (Sept. 1913): 147-63.

1097 Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006), 56.

1098 Du Bois, *The Negro American Family*, 105-6.

1099 Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 184-85.

1100 Ullman, *Martin R. Delany*, 367, 374-75, 390ff; Du Bois, *The Negro American Family*, 105; William A. Sinclair, *The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 283; Otken, *The Ills of the South*, 26-27. To calculate what an amount of money from some time

in the past is worth in today's dollars, see Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, "Purchasing Power of Money in the United States from 1774 to 2010," MeasuringWorth, 2009, http://www.measuringworth.com/ppowerus/.

1101 "The Industrial Inquiry," *NYT*, 25 June 1899, 3; Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name*, 359.

1102 See Dittmer, *Black Georgia in the Progressive Era,* 26; Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 215. The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, *Message To The Blackman in America* (Chicago: Muhammad Mosque of Islam No. 2, 1965), 37-38:

> [My people] encountered credit difficulties, hardships of repayment of loans and hardship with white executives from whom the loans must be asked.

Also, Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," 465: "[F]or most, renting meant marginal tenancy on decaying land with any profits skimmed off by absentee landlords and nearby merchants who controlled credit, marketing, and local politics."

1103 On the revenues generated by cotton see Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 295-301, and passim.

1104 Wiener, "Planter–Merchant Conflict in Reconstruction Alabama," 84.

1105 Dawidowicz, *On Equal Terms*, 26; William W. Brown and Morgan O. Reynolds, "Debt Peonage Re-examined," *Journal of Economic History* 33, no. 4 (Dec. 1973): 865. Curiously, Gene Dattel excoriates the entire global enterprise of cotton as racist to its core, but singles out and defends the "merchant lenders"—the very linchpin of the cotton superstructure that also had direct contact with the exploited Black cotton growers. See his *Cotton and Race in the Making of America,* 306-10, 330.

The Cost of the Black–Jewish Relationship

Robert Somers' interview with the Jewish country merchant Mr. Solomon provides the figures that enable us to understand the general division of the profits made by the Black ex-slave and the Jewish merchant in the postwar American South.

If we extrapolate Solomon's figures, we can come to a rough estimate of annual income and expenses. Solomon testified that he sells a "negro field-hand" his "monthly ration" of food for $6.50, making the annual charge $78. When interest on this "credit" sale is added at 50 percent,[1106] the amount owed to Solomon would be about $117. But Solomon has previously marked up these prices by 100 percent, so his actual out-of-pocket cost for these items is $40 for that family in that year—*so far* a profit of $77 accruing to the Jewish merchant.

If this sharecropper were farming 25 acres of cotton under the best weather and soil conditions, he could possibly produce a total of 12 bales of cotton.[1107] Between 1873 and 1880 the average price per bale in New Orleans was $56, giving us a total value of this sharecropper's annual harvest at about $672.[1108] But that was the price the merchant would get when he sends it to New Orleans—the Black sharecropper might have received *at most* about $35 per bale[1109] from the country store merchant, or about $420 for his entire cotton harvest that year.

And here is where the merchant's hieroglyphic deductions begin in earnest:

- Off the top of that $420 comes the **"rent"** for the use of the land, the mules, and the farming implements, amounting to about half the crop,

leaving $210 for the Black man and his family;

- next the sharecropper's **purchases**, or **"rations,"** on **"credit"** amount to $117, leaving $93;
- **ginning fees** (for seed removal) averaged $4.25/bale, reducing the sharecropper's take by another $51, to a total of $42.

So far, these deductions, though inflated by the merchant, can at least be attributed to some part of the cotton production process. But when the scribbling in the "book on the schwartses" concludes, the *average* sharecropper is in debt by as much as $150 (based on Henry Adams' 1876 study). The remaining grand deduction of $192 is determined by merchant whim—open theft at the point of a pencil.[1110] Charges, overcharges, late fees, handling charges, service charges, supervision fees, and a host of other unscrupulously imaginative fees are deducted for "taxes," clothing, shoes, food, or any other item (whether it was actually purchased or not), and are based on the "credit prices," which have marked up the items by as much as 400 percent—and that is before the usurious interest is applied. Just as in slavery, actual cash never makes it into the hands of the Black man, who must tell his 2-4 seasonal helpers to pick up their wages and "rations" from the merchant, who has them on credit accounts too. At the end of this fleecing, the Black sharecropper has paid the merchant $16 per bale for the privilege of being returned to slavery.

So for all his backbreaking toil, the "free" Black man now *owed* money to a country store merchant and *by law* had to remain on the land to try to make up the difference in next year's crop. The bales of

cotton, which had a market value of $672, had earned for the Black man and his family less than subsistence, and *no actual profit*. When the merchant's real costs are calculated—that is, his actual costs for the sharecroppers' "rations"—and doubled for incidental overhead expenses, they come to about $80. The rest, $592, was now in the hands of an astounding Jewish cotton-dealing network, with some individual firms handling every year as much as 70 to 80 thousand bales valued at millions of dollars.[1111]

In the case of H. Hiller,[1112] with each of his 400 Black sharecroppers producing a *profit* of $592, Hiller would have made $236,800—in just one year (today's value: almost $6.4 million)! The added benefit for Mr. Hiller is that even with these dazzling profits, each of the 400 Black family farms would have ended the year in debt by about $150 and would have collectively owed Hiller $60,000 (the equivalent of $1.5 million in today's dollars)—due at the end of the following year.

1106 Ransom and Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom*, 130, 343 n. 39.

1107 Estimates differ. But to cover himself, the merchant required a specific number of bales as "rent," and these amounts were often unrealistic given the best conditions. See one contract of Orange Pucket, who in 1878 rented twenty-five acres of land for the price of ten bales of cotton despite the fact that it was estimated that two to eight acres of land were needed to produce a single 400- to 450-lb. bale. See Painter, *Exodusters*, 57, 59. It was estimated that an average Black farming family farmed enough land to produce fifteen to forty bales of cotton annually. On yields see Hugh G. J. Aitken, ed., *Did Slavery Pay? Readings in the Economics of Black Slavery in the United States* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 216-18, 229-30.

1108 The comparative value of an 1870 dollar shows that at the time of these transactions, $25 bought a horse; and a storefront commercial building could be purchased for $600. Prime plantation land could be bought for as little as 50¢ to $65 per acre.

1109 Bush, *An American Harvest*, 75.

1110 Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 123-24, 218 n. 25.

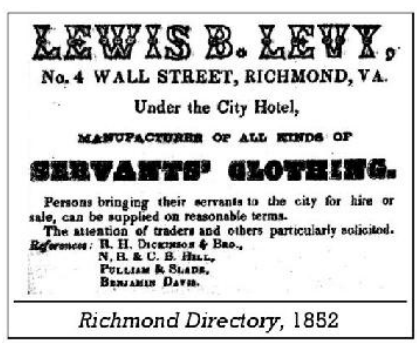
1111 Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews,* 84; Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 221, 222; Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 13. By comparison, this was at a time when a Gentile planter, Edmund Richardson, was

hailed as “the largest cotton planter in the world,” with an 1881 total cotton production of 11,500 bales. Richardson’s plantations were a prime example of the convict leasing system established after emancipation, whereby Blacks were often imprisoned just for being young, Black, and male and then “rented” to plantations as slaves. See Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name,* 371, 375. Nearly all of Mississippi’s Black “convicts” worked on Richardson’s plantations, beginning in 1868. Another Gentile user of the convict leasing system was Nathan Bedford Forrest, the father of the Ku Klux Klan. See Willis, *Forgotten Time*, 16-18ff. LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 110: Jacob Jacobson “was involved in the state’s [Ark.] purchase of the Cummins plantation southeast of Little Rock to be used as a penal farm.” (Jacobson was the father of politician Charles Jacobson, who served as secretary to Gov. Jeff Davis.)

1112 Jewish merchant H. Hiller owned 400 farms in Mississippi, all farmed by sharecroppers. Holmes, “Whitecapping,” 249; Mason, “Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South,” 95-99. Mason misspells Bierfield as Barfield and Hiller as Miller.

Jews and the "Needle Trades"

Add to these impressive Jewish cottonfield profits the significant fact that a sizable percentage of the South's massive cotton shipments were destined for the northern American industrial centers, most often ending up in the factories of Jewish clothing and textile manufacturers. Seventy percent of the cotton harvested in America was used to make dresses, coats, hats, slacks, and shirts and household goods like curtains, sheets, pillow cases, and towels, all of which constitute what used to be called the "needle trades." Those engaged in these businesses may have felt untainted by slavery, but they were as much involved as any slave-shipper or auctioneer.


LEWIS B. LEVY,

No. 4 WALL STREET, RICHMOND, VA.

Under the City Hotel,

MANUFACTURER OF ALL KINDS OF

SERVANTS' CLOTHING.

Persons bringing their servants to the city for hire or sale, can be supplied on reasonable terms.
The attention of traders and others particularly solicited.
References: R. H. Dickinson & Bro.,
N. B. & C. B. Hill,
Pulliam & Slade,
Benjamin David.

Richmond Directory, 1852

According to the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, "The needle trades have been the most distinctively Jewish group of industries in the United States." By 1880, practically every large city had some important clothing manufacturer. According to Rabbi Allan Tarshish:

> In New York City, 80 percent of all retail, and 90 percent of all wholesale clothing firms, were owned by Jews. In the rest of

> the country, 75 per cent of the clothing companies were Jewish, and most of them were controlled by Jews.[1113]

This business has been portrayed as little more than a cottage industry that employed families of European immigrants, but it was far more. At the time of the Civil War, the cotton textile industry led America's other manufacturing sectors. And the revenues that flowed to the South from the sale of cotton allowed it to purchase all other Northern manufactures. In 1860 alone the needle trades devoured 423 million pounds of slave-grown cotton (that's 850,000 bales), generating revenues of $116 million. That volume increased fivefold by 1910, generating $617 million. To feed this "Jewish" industry required the cultivation of increasingly large swaths of Southern acreage—from 12 million acres in 1860 to almost 46 million in 1925.[1114]

What's more, there was a time when the garment workers were nearly all Jewish, and the principal dealers in both new and secondhand attire were mainly Jews.[1115] Jewish historian Isaac Markens confirms this assessment:

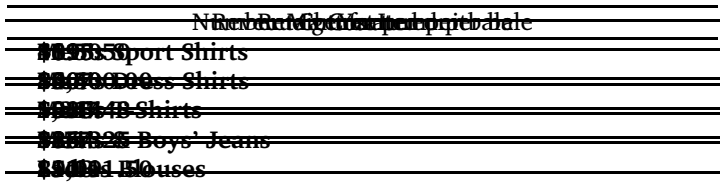
> Most remarkable has been the growth of the clothing trade, of which there are 241 manufacturers in the city of New York. Of these, 234 are Hebrew firms, some of which employ as many as 2,000 hands, while the great majority of the 30,000 people engaged in the clothing trade throughout the United States are also Hebrews….[T]here are now in New York a large number of manufacturers, the great majority of whom are Hebrews whose annual production is $15,000,000….In the manufacture of

> shirts the Hebrews have secured a monopoly, it being estimated that 25,000 men and women are directly and indirectly employed in New York City by Hebrew firms alone. The wealthiest concerns in the trade, which include several millionaires…[1116]

Jews were found producing or marketing clothing for the African captives within the slave system, supplying plantations with the flimsy prison-like overalls and reminding the slave owners in their advertisements that proper packaging of their human chattel fetched higher prices. Jews supplied the pro-slavery Confederate Army with uniforms, and the Ku Klux Klan with hoods and sheets for their terrorist raids and lynching parties.[1117]

By 1860, cotton manufacturing had become the leading industry in the U.S.[1118] A single bale of cotton, picked by a Black man or woman for the meager daily wage of 43¢,[1119] in the hands of Jewish clothing manufacturers throughout the Lower East Side of New York could be transformed into 215 pairs of jeans, or 690 terry bath towels, or 1,256 pillowcases, or 2,104 men's boxer shorts, or 3,085 diapers, or 249 bed sheets—and not a penny of these value-added cotton products accrued to anyone with black skin.[1120] Cotton was so central to the wealth of New York that it was said that "Its glory was built largely of bricks of cotton."[1121] The profits from this lucrative product of African toil are yet another prime economic benefit of the Black–Jewish relationship. By 1880, 6,000 clothing firms nationwide were able to manufacture clothing worth $209,000,000.[1122]

Products Per Single Bale of Cotton & Profits of the "Needle Trades"[1123]



The milling of cotton, which turned fiber into fabric, also became the domain of Southern Jews and turned many into millionaires. Mill owner Jacob Elsas was the largest employer in Atlanta and retired "with a cool $10,000,000 to his credit"—at a time when most Georgia farmworkers (numbering 170,000) were trying to support families on a daily wage of about 50 cents.[1124]

1113 *AF Encyclopedia of Textiles* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1960), 89; UJE (1942), s.v. "needle trades"; Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 27-29; Roger D. Waldinger, *Through the Eye of the Needle: Immigrants and Enterprise in New York's Garment Trades* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1986), 51ff, 123; Allan Tarshish, "The Economic Life of the American Jew in the Middle Nineteenth Century," in *Essays in American Jewish History* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1958), 281, Internet Archive, http://www.archive.org/stream/essaysinAmer-ican012816mbp/essaysinamerican012816mbp_djvu.txt.

1114 Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 82, 295-96, 310.

1115 Benjamin Stolberg, *Tailor's Progress: The Story of a Famous Union and the Men Who Made It* (New York: Doubleday, 1944), 4; Barkai, *Branching Out*, 86; Hirshler, *Jews From Germany in the United States*, 59-61; Hertzberg, *The Jews in America*, 137. See also Raphael, *Jews and Judaism in the United States*, 17; Rudolf Glanz, "Notes on Early Jewish Peddling in America," *Jewish Social Studies* 7 (1945): 125-26; Maurice J. Karpf, *Jewish Community Organization in the United States: An Outline of Types of Organizations, Activities, and Problems* (1938; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1971), 9ff; Caroline Golab, "The Immigrant and the City: Poles, Italians, and Jews in Philadelphia, 1870-1920," in *The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Groups and Lower-Class Life, 1790-1940*, eds. Allen F. Davis and Mark H. Haller (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1973), 214.

According to a U.S. government report examining the garment district of Philadelphia: "Out of over 100 shops which we visited, we found only 2 owned by Italian contractors. The rest were Jewish….Of the 261 whom we questioned as to nationality, 237 were Jews, 20 were Italians, and 4 were Americans." See House, *Report of the Industrial Commission on Immigration*, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1901, H. Doc. 184, vol. 15 (Washington, 1901), L-LI.

1116 Markens, *The Hebrews in America*, 151-52.

1117 Frederic Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South* (Baltimore: J. H. Furst, 1931), 105-6; Bertram W. Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865," *PAJHS* 50, no. 3 (March 1961): 184 (plate); Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans*, 89; *Jews Selling Blacks* (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 2010). ISJL, "Raleigh, North Carolina," states Michael Grausman was commissioned to make uniforms for the Confederate Army. See this volume's chapter on Jews and the Ku Klux Klan.

1118 Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade and the Development of Capitalism in the United States," 389.

1119 Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 369*.

1120 The Jewish community was so interwoven with cotton that one synagogue in New York City was described in the *New York Times* thus: "The building is seven stories high…and is filled with sweat shops." See "Gun Cotton in a Synagogue," *NYT,* 26 June 1897, 1.

1121 Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery* (New York: Random House, Ballantine Books, 2005), 13ff.

1122 Allan Tarshish, "The Economic Life of the American Jew in the Middle Nineteenth Century," in *Essays in American Jewish History* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1958), 280. That's $4.9 billion in today's dollars.

1123 Scott Derks, ed., *The Value of a Dollar: 1860-1999* (Lakeville, CT: Grey House, 1999), 6, 20, 80, 104.

1124 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 139; Gary M. Fink, *The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills Strike of 1914–1915: Espionage, Labor Conflict, and New South Industrial Relations,* Cornell Studies in Industrial and Labor Relations, no. 28 (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, 1993), 146, 86, 3, 42, 91, 92, 88; Dittmer, *Black Georgia in the Progressive Era*, 23-25ff.

The Rothschilds & The Sharecropper: The Global Connection

In the case of Mr Rothschild, the documents reveal for the first time that he made personal gains by using slaves as collateral in banking dealings with a slave owner.

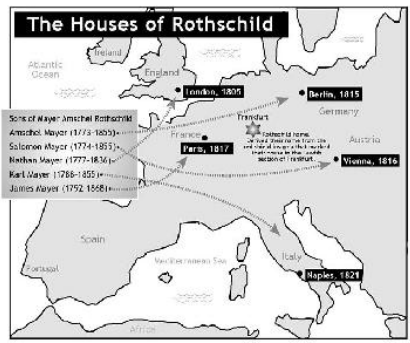
—

Financial Times, June 2009

Jewish merchants like Mr. Solomon in Mississippi could be found in the cotton fields managing crop production and the Black labor force. On the other end of the international cotton equation were the Jewish financiers and investment bankers that kept the money and lines of credit flowing into America's cotton belt.

For more than two hundred years the legend of the all-powerful Rothschild family of international bankers has been a source of both pride and angst for the Jewish people. Their operations are so extensive in the history of world finance, their wealth so vast, and their political influence so far-reaching that they far surpass Shakespeare's stereotype of the rich and greedy Jewish moneylender, "Shylock," in his play *The Merchant of*

Venice. On the other hand, the acknowledged skill and influence of the House of Rothschild have earned for the Jewish people a profitable reputation as the most adept and capable in any matter concerning finance and capital investment.[1125]



When Spain and Portugal wanted to build railroads in Africa, they sought funding from the House of Rothschild. When America wanted to seize Mexico, the Rothschilds bankrolled it.[1126] The building of both the Panama and Suez[1127] Canals was backed with Rothschild financing. In fact it is said that throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was almost no economic, technological, or political development in which the House of Rothschild did not play some role.[1128] As their most sympathetic biographer asserted, "the Rothschilds proved on numerous occasions…that they had the financial muscle to oust even their most powerful rivals from business they coveted."[1129]

As we have seen, there was a massive financial superstructure directing the commercial activities in the most remote Mississippi Delta cotton fields. The seemingly limitless money flow into the Southern region through the exclusively Jewish business networks can ultimately be traced to the great

Jewish international banking families of Europe, particularly the Rothschilds.

At various times, the Rothschilds were directly and heavily involved in ventures that promoted the enslavement and exploitation of the African.[1130] They were heavily invested in the diamond mines of South Africa and the development of the notorious Apartheid system.[1131] They had interests not only in the tobacco trade in the slavery-entrenched island of Cuba,[1132] but also in the Gold Rush of the American West.[1133] And the seat of the slavocracy, the American South, was no less enticing to the greatest of all investment houses.

1125 See Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets, 1798-1848* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998); Rudolf Glanz, "The Rothschild Legend in America," *Jewish Social Studies* 19 (Jan.-Apr. 1957).

1126 Derek Wilson, *Rothschild: The Wealth and Power of a Dynasty* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 180; Salomon de Rothschild, *A Casual View of America: The Home Letters of Salomon de Rothschild, 1859-1861,* trans. Sigmund Diamond (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1961), 5. The United States seized the area now known as Texas and westward when the Mexicans tried to free the slaves that whites brought to the region. The House of Rothschild was seeking cotton profits from that region.

1127 Frederic Morton, *The Rothschilds: A Family Portrait* (New York: Fawcett, 1961), 56, 129-31, 144; Richard Davis, *The English Rothschilds* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1983), 152ff.

1128 Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker, 1849-1999* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998); Wilson, *Rothschild*, 176.

1129 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*, 369. See J.A. Hobson, quoted in Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, 284; Harold Pollins, *Economic History of the Jews in England* (London: Associated Univ. Presses, 1982), 169.

1130 "…Rothschilds' trade in commodities in general…has been largely ignored to date by historians." Richard Schofield, "'Up to our noses in smoke,'" *The Rothschild Archive: Review of the Year April 2000-March 2001*, p. 20, Rothschild Archive, New Court, London.

1131 Robert Vicat Turrell with Jean-Jacques Van Helten, "The Rothschilds, The Exploration Company and Mining Finance," *Business History* 28, no. 1 (Jan. 1986): 183; Milton Shain, "From Pariah to Parvenu: The Anti-Jewish Stereotype in South Africa, 1880-1910," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 26, no. 2 (Dec. 1984): 115; M.I. Cohen, "The Jewish Communities of Rhodesia and the North," *South African*

Jewish Year Book (Johannesburg: South African Jewish Historical Society, 1929), 131.

1132 Schofield, "'Up to our noses in smoke,'" 20.

1133 Turrell, "The Rothschilds, The Exploration Company and Mining Finance," 183.

The House of Rothschild: House of Slavery

To properly contextualize the Rothschilds' role in the slave economy, it is important to first demystify the family's early rise to power. The popular version of the Rothschild legend begins this way: At a critical moment in European capitalism the family's great German patriarch Mayer Amschel Rothschild (1744–1812), seeking to fulfill his diabolical desire to control the wealth of the world, sent five of his sons to set up central banks in five different countries, namely, Italy, England, France, Austria, and Germany. From these positions of influence, the legend goes, the House of Rothschild, through its strategic moneylending and political manipulation, soon gained control over the financial affairs of all of Europe and its extensive and expanding colonial empires, as well as America, the Vatican, and even Mecca. It is widely believed that there is no government action or private transaction, war or famine, election or coup, fortune or bankruptcy for which the Rothschilds have not been credited or blamed.

The truth of the origin of the Rothschilds' power is more mundane, though no less ruthless. The family did indeed become the richest in the world, with wealth said to exceed $6 billion[1134] in a time when that sum made them "the biggest bank in the world; by 1825 ten times the size of their nearest rivals."[1135] But the route they took to that end was, for a Jewish firm, rather routine. In the late 18th century, around the time of the American Revolution, Mayer Amschel Rothschild was operating a successful business from his home in the Jewish section of Frankfurt, Germany.[1136] He was selling rare coins but derived a larger portion of his income from the sale of cloth manufactured at the

factories of England and from the raw cotton in bales[1137] direct from the colonial plantations of the New World.[1138]

This is an important but often ignored detail of the early formation of the Rothschild financial dynasty—that the Rothschilds' unparalleled success was based on their extensive trading in African slave-produced commodities, and not on the father's purported megalomaniacal dream to control world finance. For one does not become a banker simply by mere wishful thinking. Through other means, such as trade or commerce, one generates the *excess* profits that are used to invest in other successful business ventures. This earns that investor the trust and business associations that lead to the creation of a successful banking enterprise. The Rothschild family patriarch was a successful trader and moneylender on a moderate scale but ranked only eleventh in wealth among the Jewish families in Frankfurt—hardly generating the resources necessary to become the nucleus of an international financial empire.[1139]

A series of fortuitous, timely, even lucky, events framed the Rothschilds' rise to success. England's economy had, by the mid- to late 1700s, become totally dependent on the slave trade. Historian Eric Williams explains the European business climate the Rothschilds inherited:

> By 1750 there was hardly a trading or a manufacturing town in England which was not in some way connected with the triangular or direct colonial trade. The profits obtained [from the slave trade] provided one of the main streams of that accumulation of capital in England which financed the Industrial Revolution. The

> West Indian islands became the hub of the British Empire, of immense importance to the grandeur and prosperity of England.[1140]

British slave ships would return from their triangular trade routes to their home port of Liverpool loaded with cotton bales and other valuable raw imports. The plantation plunder was then transported up the road to the Manchester mills for manufacturing into various textile products (cloth, clothing, etc.), which, in turn, were shipped south from Liverpool to trade for kidnapped Black African human beings headed for the plantation colonies of the New World.

Some of these textiles and raw cotton bales would be distributed by merchants like Mayer Amschel Rothschild for resale throughout Europe at extraordinary profits.[1141] In fact, many Jewish merchants grew wealthy in all aspects of this trade and the Rothschilds were no exception. By the 1840s at least seventy-six Jews in Manchester—fully one-third of the working adult males—were engaged in the cotton trade.[1142] In 1798, a disagreement between the Rothschilds and their Manchester-based cotton wholesaler cut Rothschild off from his supply. That is when third son Nathan (1777–1836) decided to relocate to Manchester, now known as the "international emporium for cotton goods," to establish a direct connection to the source.[1143] It is Nathan's cotton and textile trading network that initiated the Rothschilds' extraordinary rise in wealth and influence.[1144] And just as the palaces of Madrid and Toledo were built with the fees Spain charged to transport African slaves, so too were the palatial mansions of the Rothschilds financed by the African slave trade. A British analyst wrote of the benefits of the nefarious

business:

> There is not a brick in the city but what is cemented with the blood of a slave. Sumptuous mansions, luxurious living, liveried menials, were the produce of the wealth made from the sufferings and groans of the slaves bought and sold by the Bristol[, England,] merchants.[1145]

Nathan Rothschild arrived in the world's cotton textile trading capital at the same moment in history that Eli Whitney's cotton gin revolutionized cotton production, an innovation that inflated supply and made all cotton products affordable to the masses. British imports from its former colony, now the United States, increased from nine million dollars in 1792 to nearly thirty-one million in 1801, and Nathan had strategically positioned the Rothschilds to profit from the resulting boom.[1146]

Nathan Mayer Rothschild

By 1799, Nathan was "a major cotton merchant on the Manchester Exchange." And it was here that

the young man's reputation for ruthlessness was honed and sharpened. According to historian Herbert H. Kaplan, "The evidence is both explicit and implicit that Nathan was not a merchant of character." He was considered irresponsible, unethical, and rude, but he was also highly innovative in his targeting of profitable opportunities in the cotton business.[1147] He teamed with other merchants to take economic advantage of the era's chaotic political events to monopolize markets and inflate profits. He also used his growing status to develop business relationships with the European ruling class. He developed a sophisticated smuggling operation that added immensely to the Rothschild legend and added far more to the Rothschilds' coffers. And, again, the products were the ill-gotten cargos of Black slavery —indigo, coffee, sugar, silver, and gold bullion.[1148]

Ultimately, Nathan Mayer Rothschild's success as an independent cotton wholesaler gave the family the ability to expand their sideline business of *moneylending*[1149] *into the more prestigious and honorable enterprise of banking*.[1150] It was only after a full decade of highly profitable trading that Nathan moved to London, married into a wealthy family of Jewish merchants, and established the first franchise of the House of Rothschild. His new brother-in-law Samuel Moses Samuel conducted a business with his sons called "Samuel Brothers, African Merchants," and through this connection, Nathan was able to gain business access to Brazil, where there was the greatest concentration of African slaves in the western hemisphere. It was at this time—1812, say scholars—that Rothschild "began to supply cash to the British armies on the continent. Brazil, with its gold mines, was a good source for the specie he needed." This gold, of course, was mined by Black and Indian slaves.[1151]

From this base, and in partnership with other Jewish trading firms,[1152] Nathan Rothschild and his brothers could now open branches in Europe's other trading centers. Indeed, wrote Dr. Williams,

> Many of the eighteenth century banks established in Liverpool and Manchester, the slaving metropolis and the cotton capital respectively, were directly associated with the triangular trade.[1153]

Thus, even the multi-conglomerate Rothschild banking firm had its root in and continued to rely on Black African slavery. And once in banking, they yet maintained their deep interests in the Cotton South.

1134 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, xxiii; Morton, *The Rothschilds*, 56: "No one else, from the Fuggers to the Rockefellers, has come close to that hair-raising figure."

1135 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, xxv.

1136 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*, 43; Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: HarperCollins, 1987), 315. On their wealth see Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, 285, 290.

1137 Virginia Cowles, *The Rothschilds: A Family of Fortune* (New York: Knopf, 1973), 22; Morton, *The Rothschilds*, 33-34; Amos Elon, *Founder: A Portrait of the First Rothschild and His Time* (New York: Viking, 1996), 48: "…bales of cotton and silk cloth, a main source of income…"

1138 Davis, *The English Rothschilds*, 21: "It was cotton that had done it all." Pollins, *Economic History of the Jews in England*, 93-95; Bill Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry, 1740-1875* (Manchester, England: Manchester Univ. Press; New York: Holmes & Meier, 1976), 18-19.

1139 Cowles, *The Rothschilds*, 22; Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, 315. Joseph Wechsberg, *The Merchant Bankers* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966), 303, speaks of bankers having first been merchants. See also Huibert Schijf, "Jewish Bankers 1850-1914: Internationalization along Ethnic Lines," in *Diaspora Entrepreneurial Networks: Four Centuries of History*, eds. Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, Gelina Harlaftis, and Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 191-216.

1140 Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944; reprint, New York: Capricorn Books, 1966), 52. Also ibid., 25, 54: "In 1697…Little Barbados, with its 166 square miles, was worth more to British

capitalism than New England, New York and Pennsylvania combined." Williams writes (p. 52) that the British Empire was "a magnificent superstructure of American commerce and naval power on an African foundation." And ibid., 53:

> In 1798 [prime minister William] Pitt assessed the annual income from West Indian plantations at four million pounds as compared with one million from the rest of the world. As Adam Smith wrote: "The profits of a sugar plantation in any of our West Indian colonies are generally much greater than those of any other cultivation that is known either in Europe or America."

1141 Wilson, *Rothschild*, 22-23; Georg Heuberger, *The Rothschilds: A European Family* (Sigmaringen, Germany: Thorbecke, 1994), 36, 39; Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 52.

1142 See for example Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry,* 83-84. See also Berthold Altmann, "Jews and the Rise of Capitalism: Economic Theory and Practice in a Westphalian Community," *Jewish Social Studies* 5 (1943): 171-73, for the roles that farming and lending to farmers played in Jewish acquisition of wealth in Europe.

1143 Cowles, *The Rothschilds*, 22-23; Pollins, *Economic History of the Jews in England*, 93-95.

1144 Morton, *The Rothschilds*, 35; Wilson, *Rothschild*, 175-76; S.D. Chapman, "The Foundation of the English Rothschilds: N.M. Rothschild as a Textile Merchant, 1799-1811," *Textile History* 8 (1977): 99. Between 1800 and 1825 Nathan engineered an astounding rise in the family's wealth from £80,000 to £4,000,000. Other "lucky" events included well-timed wars for which the Rothschilds supplied the winners; the suicide deaths of the main financiers of the British crown, leaving a void filled by the Rothschilds; and the marriage of Nathan into a wealthy and politically connected Jewish family. Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets,* 59. As David S. Katz wryly expressed it in his book *The Jews in the History of England, 1485-1850* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), 286, "War brings death and injury to some, but prosperity to others. One of the most celebrated winners was Nathan Mayer Rothschild…" Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, 316: "The combined Rothschild capital rose steadily, to £1.77 million in 1818, to £4.3 million in 1828, to £34.35 million in 1875..." Also, American businessmen in this era used the profits of their cotton trading to fuel the industrial revolution. See Charles R. Morris, *The Tycoons* (New York: H. Holt, 2005), 40.

1145 Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 39, 61.

1146 Ibid., 124. See also chart titled "The Fabric of Civilization: Slavery and Cotton in the U.S. and British Economy, 1790-1860," in Ronald Bailey's "The Slave(ry) Trade and the Development of Capitalism in the United States: The Textile Industry in New England" (Dept. of African-American Studies, Northeastern University, Boston, 1990, photocopy).

1147 Herbert H. Kaplan, *Nathan Mayer Rothschild and the Creation of a Dynasty: The Critical Years, 1806–1816* (Stanford, CA: Stanford

Univ. Press, 2006), 4, 6; Chapman, "The Foundation of the English Rothschilds," 99, 104-6; Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 63.

1148 Kaplan, *Nathan Mayer Rothschild*, 11-13, 48. It was the smuggling of silver and gold that caused the British government to turn to Nathan to broker its bullion trading. "And it was that relationship, *based though it was on illegality and smuggling*, that established Nathan as a dependable international banker, which became the basis for the creation of the Rothschild financial dynasty." (Emphasis ours) On Rothschild smuggling see Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets,* 58; Muhlstein, *Baron James*, 35; Heuberger, *The Rothschilds*, 39; Egon Caesar Corti, *The Rise of the House of Rothschild,* trans. Brian Lunn and Beatrix Lunn (New York, 1928), 90-91, 152; Marcus E. Ravage, *Five Men of Frankfort: The Story of the Rothschilds* (New York: Dial Press, 1934), 68-69. According to Wechsberg, *The Merchant Bankers*, 298-300, the Rothschild smuggling operation served as a model for later Jewish cotton merchants.

1149 Since the 1600s the Rothschilds had been moneylenders and cloth salesmen. Elon, *Founder*, 43, 47.

1150 Chapman, "The Foundation of the English Rothschilds," 99-115.

1151 Roderick J. Barman, "Nathan Mayer Rothschild and Brazil: The Role of Samuel Phillips & Co.," *The Rothschild Archive: Review of the Year April 2002-March 2003,* pp. 38-39, Rothschild Archive, New Court, London. Another family-connected Jewish firm, Samuel & Phillips, was contracted by the Brazilian government in 1831 "to handle the government's funds in London and to sell the diamonds, dye woods, cotton and other commodities it sent to Europe." Ibid., 43. Also, Heuberger, *The Rothschilds*, 144-45.

1152 Chapman, "The Foundation of the English Rothschilds," 108-14.

1153 Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 98-99. The Rothschilds' move into banking was not unusual by any means. Many British cotton and textile merchants parlayed their wealth into banking, though none with as much success as the Rothschilds. See for instance Stuart Jones, "The Manchester Cotton Magnates' Move Into Banking, 1826-1850," *Textile History* 9 (1978). Similarly, many, many Jewish Southerners followed the same career path. See also Chapman, "The Foundation of the English Rothschilds," 101-2.

The Rothschilds' Interests in American Slavery

We all know that the first bankers of the world—Rothschilds —are Jews; we know they control not only the money market, but also the political destiny of the European world…

—

Simon Wolf, president, B'nai B'rith

By the early 1820s the five sons of Mayer Amschel Rothschild had established branches throughout Europe, and their international dealings soon became well known and extensive.[1154] The source of their wealth is clear, but the source of the Rothschild family's acute business instincts and acumen is revealing. Like most other Jews in the 18th-century Frankfurt ghetto, the Rothschilds attended a Jewish religious school for the intense study of the Jewish Talmud. The school was run entirely by Jews and focused obsessively on trade and finance.[1155] Nathan took strongly to his lessons and was described as "an unashamed devotee of the God of Trade."[1156] Amos Elon writes that the Frankfurt Judengasse

> was a center of Jewish learning….There was, of course, a pervasive addiction to money and trade….It was a peculiarity of Jewish ghetto life at the time that the richest, most successful merchants, jewellers or moneychangers, were sometimes also the most learned Talmudic scholars.[1157]

Nathan himself explained it this way: "I do not read books, I do not play cards, I do not go to the theatre, my only pleasure is my business."[1158] Such religious devotion to business and trade did not bode well for the Black man and woman in a slavery-based economy.

Trusted to handle investments and arrange financing for government operations, the House of Rothschild gained access to the coffers of several of Europe's monarchs and governments. These activities are well researched, discussed, and interpreted elsewhere,[1159] but the family never took their eyes off their commodities trading—and that meant a keen interest in the slave economy of the Mississippi Delta. For though their profitable financial dealings made them a virtual empire unto themselves, the family's biographer makes an extraordinary point:

> In order to fund their growing banking enterprise the Rothschilds had to have maximum liquidity and their day-to-day cash income came from trade….Cotton and woollen cloth, sugar, indigo, coffee, tobacco and wine were the staples of Mayer Amschel's commercial business.[1160]

While almost the entire scholarly (and

conspiratorial) world has focused on the legendary political intrigues of the Rothschilds, the family's dependence on the dirty business of slavery has been almost totally ignored. Their methods may have been indistinguishable from the tactics of thousands of Jewish merchants in America and around the world with wide-ranging connections to the plantation economy, but the Rothschilds were simply better and more sophisticated,[1161] and strategically positioned to capitalize on the upheavals of Western expansion.

According to Derek Wilson, the Rothschilds "had bought cotton from the southern states" and had "developed heavy American commitments." Nathan in the London branch

> had acquired a considerable stake in the future of the continent. He had made loans to various states of the Union, had been, for a time, the official European banker for the US government and was a pledged supporter of the Bank of the United States.

Wilson reinforces the point, adding that "they [the Rothschilds] had a considerable stake in the slave-owning south…"[1162]

From 4,000 miles away the Rothschilds kept their European hands deep in the Southern cotton economy by way of agents they hired to do their bidding. As the network of loans and crop liens developed throughout the South, the source of the cascading credit lines reached past Philadelphia and New York to the major banking houses of London—especially the House of Rothschild.[1163] A scholar was speaking of the banking activities of the Rothschilds when he explained that

> International finance was a web connecting field workers in Alabama, sailors in New York, barkeeps in Liverpool, distillers in the West Indies, and mill workers in Manchester…[1164]

New Orleans merchant-banker Samuel Hermann hailed from the Rothschilds' hometown of Frankfurt. He "trafficked in slaves," dealt in real estate and stocks, and *advanced money to the planters on their crops*.[1165] The "House of Hermann" was directly connected to New York through the Jewish banking firm of J.L. and S.I. Joseph & Co.,[1166] which had become millionaires as the Rothschilds' agent in New York.[1167] One Rothschild biographer was clear:

> American exports of cotton and tobacco to Europe were advancing by leaps and bounds, and by the mid-1830s the [Rothschild firm's] London and Paris houses were doing a considerable volume of business in the bills generated by this trade, advancing substantial sums to a number of American bankers, notably J.L. and S.I. Joseph.[1168]

Nevertheless, owing to the large investment in slave-picked cotton, the Joseph firm went bankrupt in 1837 when the cotton market in New Orleans collapsed, leaving them owing creditors a stunning sum of $7 million. Just a week prior, the office building they were constructing caved in and shook all of Wall Street. Their New Orleans cotton connection, Samuel Hermann, was said to have lost $10,000,000 in the crash.[1169]

August Belmont (1813–1890) landed in New York in 1837 to pick up the pieces of this disaster.

His original intent was to head to a politically unstable Cuba to assess the risk there to Rothschild tobacco interests, but the American cotton market proved much too enticing. Belmont, a Jew who changed his name from Schönberg, rented a small room at 78 Wall Street and began to speculate in cotton and securities.[1170] He purchased stock on behalf of the Rothschild's London office, traded in tobacco, cotton, lead, and mercury, and handled the financing of various government and railway projects.[1171] Belmont grew the Rothschilds' profits immensely during his post as agent, and he used his well-earned moniker as "the King of the Money Changers" to maneuver himself into political leadership of the Democratic Party—the party of the slaveholder elite. He once suggested that a debt could "be secured by a mortgage on the negroes themselves or by some other tangible security."[1172]

The Rothschilds signaled their deep interest in American cotton. As the Bank of the United States sought foreign investment in 1839, it arranged a deal with the Rothschilds that included a "quasi-monopoly on cotton exports," a financial marriage according to scholar Niall Ferguson that was "made in heaven" for the Rothschilds.[1173] The terms of the deal show conclusively that to the exclusion of all other commodities, the richest investment bankers in the world had focused their American investment squarely on the chief product of Black slave labor. Other factors undermined that particular deal but the private cotton markets were completely open to Rothschild investment.[1174]

Only a decade after Belmont had taken over the Rothschilds' American affairs, the Paris, France-based Alphonse de Rothschild came over to survey the opportunities. In 1848, he wrote excitedly that

> the country possesses such elements of prosperity that one would have to be blind not to recognise them….I have no hesitation in saying that a Rothschild house, and not just an agency should be established in America.[1175]

1154 Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, 315-16.

1155 Elon, *Founder*, 51.

1156 Davis, *The English Rothschilds*, 21.

1157 Elon, *Founder*, 51-52, 54; Altmann, "Jews and the Rise of Capitalism," 181.

1158 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, xxii.

1159 See for example Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*; Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*; Wilson, *Rothschild*.

1160 Wilson, *Rothschild*, 23.

1161 Heuberger, *The Rothschilds*, 42: "Nathan's switch from trading into banking was nothing unusual..." Henry L. Feingold, *A Midrash on American Jewish History* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1982), 42-43.

1162 Wilson, *Rothschild*, 178, 180, 183.

1163 Walter Buckingham Smith, *Economic Aspects of the Second Bank of the United States* (1953; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 93-94; David Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue: The Fortunes of August Belmont* (New York: Dial Press, 1981), 24.

1164 Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue*, 24.

1165 Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 1 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 178; Saul S. Friedman, *Jews and the American Slave Trade* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1998), 180. According to the census of 1810, Hermann enslaved four Black Africans—ten in 1820 and seventeen in 1830. His "participation in the slave system throughout the years was extensive. In 1825, for instance, he sold sixteen slaves to various farmers in St. Charles Parish." See Bertram W. Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865," *PAJHS* 50, no. 3 (March 1961): 157 n. 11; Bertram W. Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 111-13, 300 n. 45. Rabbi Korn speculates (in *Early Jews*, 127-34) that Jewish banker Ruben Levin Rochelle of New Orleans changed his name from Rothschild and that his business partnership with Hart Moses Schiff was spawned when both the Schiffs and the Rothschilds lived in the same house in Frankfurt, Germany's Jewish ghetto. Jacob Schiff, a descendant of Hart Moses Schiff, would ultimately become the head of the giant banking and investment firm Kuhn, Loeb and Company.

1166 Richard Holcombe Kilbourne, *Slave Agriculture and Financial Markets in Antebellum America: The Bank of the United States in Mississippi, 1831-1852* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2006), 72, 75;

Schweikart, *Banking in the American South*, 214. Hermann and his sons Samuel, Jr., Lucien, and Florian all "kept ties to other Jewish banks, forming a network with some disadvantages."

1167 See also Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue*, 21; Jerry W. Markham, *A Financial History of the United States,* vol. 1, *From Christopher Columbus to the Robber Barons, 1492-1900* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 167.

1168 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*, 370. Other agents in America were Robert and Isaac Phillips in Philadelphia and the Cohen brothers in Baltimore. See Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 1:176-77; Joseph L. Blau and Salo W. Baron, *The Jews of the United States, 1790-1840: A Documentary History,* vol. 1 (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1963), 143-51.

1169 Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue*, 21; Markham, *A Financial History of the United States*, 167; Marcus, *United States Jewry*, 1:178.

1170 Wilson, *Rothschild*, 177; Rothschild, *A Casual View of America*, 6; Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*, 370; Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue*, 22, 33.

1171 Railroads were essential to the agrarian economies in moving the slave-grown cotton and other crops more efficiently from inland plantations to ports for marketing. Elaine Penn, "'Interfered with by the State of the Times': The American Civil War and the Letters of August Belmont," *The Rothschild Archive: Review of the Year April 2002-March 2003,* p. 26, Rothschild Archive, New Court, London; Schofield, "'Up to our noses in smoke,'" 16ff; Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, xxviii, 354, 355; Rothschild, *A Casual View of America*, 5. Mercury is necessary for silver mining.

1172 Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue*, 39, 85, 190, 207, 51; Carola Hoyos, "Rothschild and Freshfields founders had links to slavery, papers reveal," *Financial Times* (of London), 26 June 2009.

1173 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*, 373; Smith, *Economic Aspects of the Second Bank of the United States*, 93, 218.

1174 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*, 375: The Rothschilds sent their agent J.N. Hanau to New Orleans in the 1840s.

1175 Wilson, *Rothschild*, 181. In this time the House of Rothschild became the fiscal agent of the United States, representing America in deals with foreign powers. See Blau and Baron, *The Jews of the United States*, 1:143, 147.

The Civil War & The Rothschilds

[T] he borrower is servant to the lender.

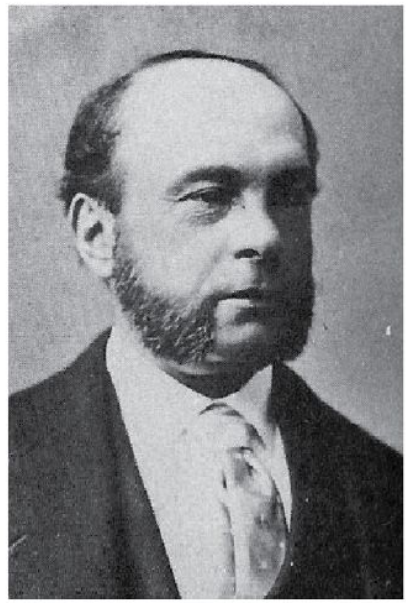
—

Proverbs
22:7

During the Civil War the Rothschilds put their support where it had *always* been—fully behind the South and the slavocracy. August Belmont adamantly opposed the presidency of Abraham Lincoln and even led the campaign for his pro-slavery opponent Stephen A. Douglas, whose rallying cry was a defiant "Abolitionism! Niggerism!" Belmont decried abolitionism, denouncing what he called Lincoln's "fatal policy of confiscation and forcible emancipation."[1176] The Rothschilds were profiting greatly from slavery, with their imports of Southern cotton and tobacco "as much a part of their transatlantic business as investment in the Northern states and railways."[1177]

As political and economic tensions rose in the years leading up to the war, the Rothschilds sent the Paris-based Salomon de Rothschild to America, to advise the family on their "moral choices."[1178] If he were an American, he revealed, he would be a "Staunch Slavery Man," and he urged that his family's influence be used to secure recognition of the Confederacy. He denounced voting rights for all Americans because such a right "confers authority on persons who are not worthy." He further declared that "everything about the Constitution of

the United States was wrong," and opined that Lincoln "has the appearance of a peasant and can only tell barroom stories."[1179]



August Belmont

Belmont was proslavery as well but leaned toward the Union because the war's certain disruption of cotton and tobacco trading could affect the Rothschilds' bottom line in a major way. For the House of Rothschild a return to the *status quo*—that is, keeping the Union intact—was the prudent business decision. A treaty between North and South—even if it maintained Black slavery in America—would drive up the value of the Rothschilds' stock portfolio.[1180]

The Black man and woman could find no relief in either Salomon de Rothschild's or Belmont's point of view. According to Wilson,

> they [the Rothschilds] persistently urged the need for a speedy peace and a compromise on the slavery issue which would not impoverish plantation owners in the South.[1181]

Other Jews sought to support the slavocracy financially. Edwin DeLeon traveled to Europe on behalf of the Confederacy, seeking investment in the military effort to maintain Black slavery.[1182] Another Jew, the French banker Emile Erlanger, actually advanced about $7 million to the rebel white supremacists,[1183] allowing them to buy weapons and ammunition, ships and cannons, indeed everything they needed to extend the war and add countless thousands to the dead and maimed. According to Judith Fenner Gentry,

> Without the Erlanger loan money, purchases of arms, supplies, and ships in Europe would have stopped, and Confederate credit would have been ruined.[1184]

Erlanger negotiated the deal with the Confederate Secretary of State—yet another Jew—Judah P. Benjamin, who was "presumed [to have] connections with the Rothschilds."[1185] The *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1909) was probably referring to these Erlanger bonds when it discussed the Rothschild involvement:

> …they invested largely in Confederate bonds and lost heavily. This appears to have disgusted them with American finance, which they left severely alone for many years, thus losing the opportunities afforded by the great

> financial expansion of the United States in the last decades of the nineteenth century.[1186]

The Erlanger bonds were backed by slave-produced cotton, but even though the war obliterated the bonds' value, cotton yet remained the economic powerhouse of the world. And the House of Rothschild did not stay aloof for long, for it maintained its interests in cotton and tobacco long after the Civil War.[1187]

The Rothschilds from their gilded mansions, palaces, and castles had purchased thousands of shares in Virginia, Mississippi, and North Carolina bonds—all bonds from Confederate states. The British House had also bought $6,000 of Confederate government securities for French clients, while hedging their bets and purchasing Union securities through Belmont.[1188]

Rothschild interest in Alabama is particularly intriguing because in 1863 the *Examiner* newspaper alleged that "Jews had bought up two-thirds of Alabama's cotton and monopolized the mercantile business throughout the South."[1189] Coincidentally in 1864, Alabama's governor appointed Jewish merchant Mayer Lehman (founder of the giant, and now defunct, Lehman Brothers investment house) as cotton agent for the state and appropriated $500,000 for the purchase of cotton. This put Lehman in charge of managing the state's chief asset—a million-bale annual cotton crop cultivated by most of the state's 435,000 enslaved Africans. The Lehmans sold their cotton directly to England or New York, bypassing local wholesalers. This concurrence of commercial events strongly suggests that this English connection was very likely the House of Rothschild.[1190]

Belmont's correspondence to his London-based bosses contains detailed information about the cotton and tobacco markets in New York and Baltimore, about the crops themselves and the problems of cultivation due to the conflict, and about particular problems of supply and the effect it had on price. Some of the information came from Belmont's cotton agent named Garter operating out of Baltimore. The "constant worry," according to a Rothschild archivist, was not over the issues of Black slavery and racial oppression, but "over the effect the war will have on the tobacco market."[1191]

Once the war ended, August Belmont sought to keep the racial status quo working to the Rothschilds' advantage, urging the Democratic Party to maintain white Southern support.[1192] He counseled his party's presidential nominee to downplay the nation's financial woes "but pitch into Negro suffrage [and] reconstruction outrages." In other words, whip up racial hatreds and passions against the Black ex-slave to retain party unity and thus maintain Rothschild profits.[1193]

1176 Ernest A. McKay, *The Civil War and New York City* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1990), 18, 19; William Harlan Hale, *Horace Greeley: Voice of the People* (New York: Harper, 1950), 162; Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, 115; August Belmont, *Letters, Speeches, and Addresses of August Belmont* (1890), 23, 137, 142, 146, 149, 206; Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue,* 77, 150-51, 182-85, 189, 231-32.

1177 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, 92. For evidence of their interests in cotton and tobacco, see *NYT*, 15 Aug. 1866, 3; 8 Nov. 1866, 2; and 20 Nov. 1866, 2.

1178 Wilson, *Rothschild*, 183.

1179 Rothschild, *A Casual View of America*, 3, 8-9, 22, 26-27, 43, 85-86, 88, 90, 102-3, 112-13, 118-24, 128-29; Wilson, *Rothschild*, 185; Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker,* 116.

1180 Marc D. Weidenmier, "Comrades in Bonds: The Subsidized Sale of Confederate War Debt to British Leaders," paper presented at a conference of the Social Science History Institute, Stanford Univ., Palo Alto, Calif., Feb. 2003, http://www.stanford.edu/group/sshi/Conferences/2002-2003/Debt2003/weidenmier.pdf.

1181 Wilson, *Rothschild*, 186. The Rothschilds arranged an

unconsummated twenty-million-pound government loan reimbursing slave owners (not the slaves) in the British dominions after the abolition of slavery. See Morton, *The Rothschilds*, 125.

1182 Stephen R. Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy: Blockade Running During the Civil War* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1988), 92: "Edwin DeLeon, a Confederate agent to France…"

1183 The original Erlanger "loan" amounted to $25 million, but Judah P. Benjamin balked at the usurious terms. See Eli N. Evans, *Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate* (New York: Free Press, 1988), 194-95. There was a new agreement of $15 million (p. 197). Ultimately, Erlanger & Co. "provided about $7 million, for which the South pledged nearly $45 million worth of cotton." See Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy*, 94. Frank Lawrence Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy: Foreign Relations of the Confederate States of America* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1959), 370, says that "the Confederacy would net only about £3,300,000 out of a £5,000,000-bond issue, and that even this sum would be rapidly reduced..." Weidenmier, "Comrades in Bonds," 4, says, "The South finally agreed to float a 20-year, 3 million pound issue with the French firm, Emile Erlanger and Company." Also, Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 168-70, 188-90.

1184 Judith Fenner Gentry, "A Confederate Success in Europe: The Erlanger Loan," *JSoHis* 36, no. 2 (May 1970): 157ff. Also Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy*, 92, 94, 142, 148, 175-76.

1185 Evans, *Judah P. Benjamin*, 195.

1186 *JEncy* (1909), s.v. "Rothschild." It is suggested by several sources that Rothschild derided the bonds out of a revulsion toward slavery, yet just a few years later Rothschild and Erlanger are signatories to a "contract" consolidating the wealth of South Africa in their European hands. See Lewis Michell, *The Life and Times of the Right Honourable Cecil John Rhodes, 1853-1902*, vol. 1 (1910; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1967), 335. For more on the Erlanger loan see Paul Pecquet Du Bellet, *The Diplomacy of the Confederate Cabinet of Richmond and Its Agents Abroad* (Tuscaloosa, AL: Confederate Publishing, 1963), 107-23; Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*, 369-83.

1187 See, for example, *NYT*, 15 Aug. 1866, 3; 8 Nov. 1866, 2; and 20 Nov. 1866, 2.

1188 Weidenmier, "Comrades in Bonds," 11. See also Reginald McGrane, *Foreign Bondholders and American State Debts* (New York: Macmillan, 1935), 51, 201-2.

1189 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 69-70.

1190 Ashkenazi, "Creoles of Jerusalem," 215-16; Flade, *The Lehmans*, 60, 63-64.

1191 Schofield, "'Up to our noses in smoke'"; Belmont, *Letters, Speeches, and Addresses*, 49, 53; Penn, "'Interfered with by the State of the Times'," 26, 28. The Rothschilds worried that some states would plant less during the war because they would be "lacking in manpower" for proper cultivation.

1192 Irving Katz, *August Belmont* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1968), 169.

1193 Ibid., 177; Belmont, *Letters, Speeches, and Addresses*, 214, 227.

The Rothschilds' Tobacco Road: "Up to our noses in smoke"

During the American conflict, Cuba remained an important fountain of riches for Spain and for the merchants of all nationalities who had interests in its tobacco, sugar, coffee, cotton, and silver. Historically, Jews were involved in all aspects of Cuban society and its economy, as well as the economy of the entire Caribbean. They were especially instrumental in the sugar business, having originally brought sugar cane to the region. Jews also were the first ones to use the now familiar protective cloth used when growing tobacco to protect the plants from the sun and wind. The dean of Jewish historians, Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, has stated that in fact tobacco "was a 'Jewish' business."[1194]

This is significant because Black slavery in the tobacco regions was as vile a system as the plantation bondage established in all other regions such as cotton, sugar, and rice. Before the rise of King Cotton, this "Jewish business" occupied 60 percent of all Black slaves in America.[1195] These conditions existed throughout the 19th century, when the Rothschilds chose to invest in the crop in a major way. The Rothschild Family Archive reveals that in 1839 James de Rothschild wrote to his nephews in Paris,

> I am most interested in the Italian Tobacco Monopoly, especially since I inspected the accounts and saw the large amounts of profit.

He was keenly aware that "Spain receives all her income from [Cuba] and it is one of the most

profitable business ventures."[1196] The Rothschilds actually held monopolies of some European tobacco markets, and to feed this demand Black slavery flourished. The Paris branch first sent Carl Scharfenberg to the Americas in the 1840s to manage the family's tobacco interests.

Another Rothschild operative named J.N. Hanau, based in New Orleans, quietly arranged the family's investments in cotton[1197] and tobacco. The correspondence reveals shipments of massive amounts of the crop, including one for 10 million Havana cigars destined for the Austrian markets. A second order for almost twice that amount soon followed. Another order for the French market was for 1,100 tons. The Spanish agents for the Rothschilds were the Jewish firm of Weisweiller and Bauer, who were "key to the successful tobacco business with Spain."[1198]

The many merchants, brokers, and agents serving the Rothschilds' tobacco needs dealt directly with the plantation masters and regularly reported back to the family about the plantation operations and conditions. Hanau sometimes found buying power diminished because suppliers inflated the price once he became known as a Rothschild operative. Scharfenberg chartered ships from Cuba loaded solely with Rothschild tobacco. Virginian Jew and slave owner Solomon Jacobs oversaw Rothschild tobacco purchases from Richmond. None of the flurry of letters, invoices, orders, and market reports suggests that the issue of slavery troubled any of the Rothschilds in any way. As Cuban society debated the moral and legal issues of the slave trade, the Rothschilds kept their focus entirely on the cash register late into the 19th century.[1199]

But the Rothschilds did not leave this lucrative business solely to agents and third parties.

Nathaniel (1812–1870), third son of Nathan Rothschild, wrote from the United States in 1844 that "We have been occupying ourselves with your tobacco…":

> I think we shall make up our minds to bid only for the Maryland; perhaps for Virginia…We have also got the Hungarian tobacco man here, so that altogether we are up to our noses in smoke.[1200]

Salomon de Rothschild visited Cuba in 1861—even as the states were in the heat of battle—and went right to a "superb" sugar mill and plantation with 330 Africans, as a guest of its owner. Later he went to New Orleans to visit a "well kept up and managed" plantation with 250 "happy" African slaves.[1201]

The activities of the Rothschild family, as well as their perceptions of themselves, were remarkable in every respect. In their meteoric rise to extraordinary fortune and international infamy, the Rothschilds were always devout Talmudic Jews *and* unabashed white supremacists. As their biographer states: "The Rothschilds had no objection to being called…king of the Jews."[1202] Even the father of world Zionism, Theodor Herzl, offered a Rothschild the title of "prince" of the "Jews' State" if the bankers would finance the appropriation of Palestinian land.[1203] Niall Ferguson writes that "[t]he key to the Rothschild attitude was that…they considered themselves the equals of royalty." But not just any royalty—family matriarch Charlotte Rothschild declared that they were in fact the "Caucasian Royal Family."[1204]

1194 Rebecca Weiner, "The Virtual Jewish History Tour: Cuba,"

American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2008, Jewish Virtual Library, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/vjw/Cuba.html; "Cuba," *JEncy*, 4:380-81; Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 2:212; Altmann, "Jews and the Rise of Capitalism," 166. Lynchburg, Virginia, merchant Samuel Untermyer claimed that his father, Isidor, had been a tobacco planter and "owner of *twelve hundred slaves*." See Richard A. Hawkins, "Lynchburg's Swabian Jewish Entrepreneurs in War and Peace," *SJH* 3 (2000): 60.

1195 Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 8. Some enslaved Blacks who picked the destructive tobacco worm off the plants were forced to eat the worms they missed. Theodore Dwight Weld, *American Slavery As It Is* **(**New York: Arno Press, 1968), 88; Randall M. Miller and John David Smith, *Dictionary of Afro-American Slavery* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 33.

1196 Schofield, "'Up to our noses in smoke,'" 17; Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*, 370. By 1898, there were over 500 Spanish Jews engaged in commerce in Cuba; five or six of the wealthiest Cuban families were Jewish. See Judah Gribetz, *The Timetables of Jewish History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 329.

1197 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets*, 375, 467.

1198 Schofield, "'Up to our noses in smoke,'" 16-17, 17-19, 21.

1199 Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 1:158, 442; Schofield, "'Up to our noses in smoke,'" 16-21.

1200 Schofield, "'Up to our noses in smoke,'" 17-19.

1201 Rothschild, *A Casual View of America*, 99, 102-3, 110-13.

1202 Davis, *The English Rothschilds*, 82.

1203 Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, 281-82.

1204 Ibid., 251. Ferguson's chapter seven is titled "'The Caucasian Royal Family.'"

Conclusion

The Southern economy's dependence on the postwar infusion of capital, much of it generated by a remarkable collection of immigrant Jewish merchants, made all the difference in the survival of the American slavery system beyond its legal end. Without the capital needed for investment in its infrastructure, the American Apartheid South would certainly have died a quick and worthy death. Blacks could have entered a truly free environment and recreated the African communal systems that had sustained them for thousands of years before the arrival of the European. Instead of bringing a well-deserved capital punishment to the slavocracy, Jewish merchants brought capital *investment*—a reprieve, or veritable pardon—to their fellow racists, who wanted nothing more than to continue slavery and its immoral racial paradigm.

These merchants supplied a lifeline, the economic oxygen to keep alive a system so injurious to Blacks that the effects are still prominently felt to this day—a century and a half after so-called emancipation. With its newfound infusion of capital, American white supremacy was regenerated and rehabilitated and was even made prosperous.[1205]

Lee M. Friedman, onetime president of the American Jewish Historical Society, concluded that "if there had been no such countryside distribution, manufacturing even of the humblest household sort could never have thrived."[1206] But it *did* thrive and expand considerably.

Jews operated "on a basis of a new power relationship" in the South in which they, with their centuries of international mercantile experience, were strategically poised to become the dominant

players. Blacks were left out of the profit-end of this equation, though they supplied 100 percent of the hard labor, while Jewish attainment of wealth in this critical post–Civil War era was unmatched in Jewish history. And despite their lucrative post–Civil War experience in America, Jews never used the immense financial power they amassed to redress the racial injustices at any time during their presence in Dixie—no boycotts, no protests, no restricting of credit or simply withdrawing from the slave economies in which they carried on their most profitable trade.

W.E.B. Du Bois was not hallucinating when he made his sober assessment of the new slavery that had descended upon the South; nor was he in error about who was responsible. He wrote in the plainest language, "The Jew is the heir of the slave-baron…" And though he later succumbed to pressure to conceal the Jew's identity by using the generic term "immigrant," Du Bois never altered the substance of his charge—that a people emigrating from another country inherited the repugnant title of "slave baron" in America and held such title for at least 30 years after the supposed emancipation. Du Bois called the system that these Jewish immigrants created

> a disgrace to 20th century civilization, and for every man which the system has helped into independence it has pushed ten back into slavery.[1207]

Moreover, no other immigrant group has been so often identified with the business end of this destructive neo-slavery as have the Jewish merchants. There were no Jewish hands extended to aid or comfort Blacks in this time or to offer them opportunities for their betterment. Blacks never

received their 40 acres, their mule, or their freedom, but as the nineteenth century drew to a close, Jews were enjoying a prosperity so unprecedented that Jewish historians universally refer to the Jim Crow era as their "Golden Age." Indeed, they were so well-thought-of that the *Atlanta Constitution* in 1882 proposed a New Deal just for them:

> Jews make excellent American citizens. They have local pride, are enterprising, progressive, and in every way better fitted to enjoy the right of suffrage than some of the hordes of other immigrants. It seems to be the correct thing to offer to Russian Jews, who are daily arriving here, if not "forty acres and a mule," at least the land part thereof. Far-seeing citizens of other states in the south have offered such gifts, but Georgia is yet to be heard from. What does she bid for a class of people estimated to be worth $1,000 apiece added to the capital of the State?[1208]

1205 Canter Brown, Jr., "Philip and Morris Dzialynski: Jewish Contributions to the Rebuilding of the South," *AJA* 44 (1992), 533: "They played a key role in helping to feed, clothe, house, and comfort a defeated people, and they extended the hand of support which helped permit the region eventually to emerge from despair."

1206 Friedman, "The Problems of Nineteenth Century American Jewish Peddlers," 5; Powdermaker, *After Freedom*, 7.

1207 Du Bois, "The Economic Future of the Negro," 237.

1208 Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978), 81. See also Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise's 1882 appeal to raise funds to settle "thousands" of Russian immigrants on 160-acre plots of U.S. government land "for their own benefit and on their own responsibility exclusively," for an "entrance fee" of just $15-$18. "An Humble Plea for a Russian Colony," *AJA* 17, no. 2 (Nov. 1965): 116-18. A specific offer of 40 acres to Russian Jews is in Rogoff, *Down Home*, 108; Korn, *Eventful Years and Experiences,* 150.

The Jews & Black Labor

Never let a nigger
pick up a tool.

—
common
American
expression

The Labor Movement in America gained its footing after the Civil War, reaching its apex a century later; and throughout its tumultuous history Blacks and Jews were time and again at the center of this epic clash of competing interests, forces, and cultures. Nevertheless, there is a calculated lack of knowledge of the Labor Movement's influential history, its role in the building of America, and its hugely destructive effect on Black progress. Most Americans are unaware that at the root of the Union Movement is race itself and that the movement's strategies and methods, within just a few decades, turned an all-Black American workforce to nearly all-white.

There is a no greater and no more profound chapter in American history than the post-slavery battle over who would ultimately benefit from America's most valuable economic asset—Black labor. In fact, the defining issue for America's leaders after the Civil War was the question of who would ultimately control the newly emancipated 3-million-strong force of Black laborers.[1209] The trans-

Atlantic slave trade, after all, was literally a labor movement—the largest in the history of the world. Untold millions of Africans were shipped thousands of miles for a singular purpose. Black labor, the ownership of which eventually brought North and South to protracted internecine bloodshed, was no less a critical need in America once the hostilities ended in 1865. America still looked to Blacks to undergird every aspect of her cotton-based economy and to continue in the roles they had performed in the western hemisphere for three centuries. Cotton remained the most important American export and was entirely dependent on Black labor. The war did not alter this reality and production went on with little deviation from prewar operations. Sugar, corn, and tobacco cultivation, coal and ore mining, road, bridge, and railway building, and any number of economic markets were similarly dependent on the labor of newly "freed" Blacks, who were no longer prepared to be forced into these roles.

At roughly the same time that America was confronting this disconcerting result of "emancipation," an unprecedented flood of European immigrants swelled America's labor pool, the vast majority embracing the philosophy of white supremacy as a virtual prerequisite of citizenship. The Labor Movement emerged at this moment in history to represent *their* interests—the interests of white laborers in search of a living wage and a secure place in American society.[1210] By an aggressive, ruthless, and blatantly racist national organizing strategy, the American Labor Movement secured control over both the nation's labor force and the Black ex-slave's future occupational opportunities.

Many of these European immigrants—about two million of them—were Jewish, and they were well

represented among the Movement's leadership as strategists, philosophers, policy engineers, and officers. Despite this extraordinary history, with its devastating effect on Black wealth and development, the American Labor Movement is entirely ignored when calculating the causes of the downward spiral of the Black condition after the so-called emancipation. Its role in the formation of the Black–Jewish relationship is almost never considered.

On the west coast, Asian Americans had their own contentious relationship with the Labor Movement. They represented a very different kind of threat to American white supremacy. Asian immigrants, like all other new arrivals, were fixed on taking full advantage of the free market economy, and they came uniquely and ably prepared to do just that. Whites and Jews organized to intercept Asian progress and even to exclude Asians from America altogether. The Labor Movement served as the hub of these anti-Asian activities, which included a series of racist legislative initiatives, a vile public-relations onslaught, and pervasive Klan-like mob violence. And, as in Labor's anti-Black crusade, Jews were among the leaders of these anti-Asian campaigns.

1209 Of the 4 million ex-slaves, approximately 3 million were 10 years of age and older, and fully 2 million were agricultural workers; others ranged from artisans and mechanics to domestics. See R.R. Wright, Jr., "The Negro in Unskilled Labor," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 49 (Sept. 1913): 19; Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery* (New York: Random House, Ballantine Books, 2005), xxvi, 10, 26.

1210 Of the 12 million American households in 1894, well under 1 percent (only 85,000) had incomes over $4,000.

Jews and Black Labor

Since the days of Columbus's forays into the western hemisphere, Jews had always been important suppliers of Black slave labor to the plantation economy.[1211] They were also major merchants and dealers in the products of slave labor, especially in the highly profitable sugar and cotton trades, and they had a huge stake in all related enterprises. So it should not be surprising to find them in leadership roles helping to manage the reorganization of the economically critical American labor system after the chaos of civil war. As has been shown, Jewish immigrants with particular mercantile skills descended upon the most fertile areas of the plantation South that had the largest concentrations of Black workers to create a distinctly Jewish economic infrastructure. Without question, the critical component of this activity was the reliable supply of labor.

At first "emancipated" Blacks actually found themselves in a relatively influential position because of their marketable skills. A census of occupations taken in 1865 placed the number of Black mechanics at 100,000, and whites at only 20,000.[1212] Throughout the South Blacks dominated the skilled crafts and construction trades, as they did in New Orleans, where they were only 25 percent of the total labor force, but they held 30 to 65 percent of all jobs as steamboatmen, draymen, masons, bricklayers, painters, bakers, carpenters, cigarmakers, plasterers, barbers, and gardeners.[1213] In 1870, half of Black women of all ages and marital statuses were in the labor force, while only 16.5 percent of white women worked outside the home.[1214]

Author, poet, early civil rights activist, and

Southerner James Weldon Johnson grew up in this era:

> All the most interesting things that came under my observation were being done by colored men. They drove the horse and mule teams, they built the houses, they laid the bricks, they painted the buildings and fences, they loaded and unloaded the ships. When I was a child, I did not know that there existed such a thing as a white carpenter or bricklayer or painter or plasterer or tinner. The thought that white men might be able to load and unload the heavy drays of the big ships was too far removed from everyday life to enter my mind.[1215]

Indeed, it was once said that if a white man were even seen in public doing *any* form of skilled labor, he would draw a crowd of gawking onlookers. Noted Southern writer Thomas Nelson Page concurred. The Black man, he said, was

> without a rival [in] the entire field of industrial labor throughout the South. Ninety-five per cent of all the industrial work of the Southern States was in his hand. And he was fully competent to do it. Every adult was either a skilled laborer or a trained mechanic.

Blacks, in fact, held a virtual monopoly of almost all labor.[1216] Even before the Civil War, Black slaves were so dominant in the workforce that some of the most racist whites, unable to compete, became abolitionists just to break up the Black monopoly. Moreover, many of these Blacks were

the major breadwinners for the families that enslaved them. Some states, seeking to give the white man an advantage, passed laws prohibiting the hiring of Blacks—slave or free—when a white man could be found to do the work. These were some of the first affirmative action laws in American history, entirely for the benefit of the white man.[1217] Unskilled, unproven, rebellious, and relentlessly bigoted, the white worker was unable to compete on equal footing with a solid Black résumé of 310 years. It was an overdependence on this talented labor resource that caused the white elites to jealously guard Black slavery to the very end and to scramble to control Black labor after slavery's demise.

1211 See Nation of Islam, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 1991).

1212 Sumner Eliot Matison, "The Labor Movement and the Negro During Reconstruction," *JNH* 33, no. 4 (Oct. 1948): 428.

1213 John W. Blassingame, *Black New Orleans, 1860-1880* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1973), 61; Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht, *The Fate of the Jews: A People Torn Between Israeli Power and Jewish Ethics* (New York: Times Books, 1983), 188-89; Carl Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer* (Chicago, 1903), 24-25; Lenni Brenner, *Jews in America Today* (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1986), 245.

1214 William H. Harris, *The Harder We Run: Black Workers Since the Civil War* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982), 23.

1215 James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way* (New York: Viking Press, 1933), 31-32, 45; Herbert Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor: In the Age of Gompers and After," *New Politics* 4 (spring 1965): 32. See also Harris, *The Harder We Run*, 196 n. 17.

1216 Lucian B. Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S., 1890-1930," *Review of Black Political Economy* 5, no. 1 (1974): 20-21, 32; Kelsey, *The Negro Farmer*, 24-25. One observer found that amongst Virginia slaves were tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, smiths, turners, wheelwrights, weavers, tanners, cabinet makers, plumbers, printers, sail makers, ship carpenters, stone cutters, and so forth. "The work is done wholly by slaves, whose numbers are in this part of the country more than double that of white persons." See Harlan Greene, Harry S. Hutchins, Jr., and Brian E. Hutchins, *Slave Badges and the Slave-Hire System in Charleston, South Carolina, 1783-1865* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2004), 13; Peter H. Wood, "Whetting, Setting and Laying Timbers: Black Builders in the Early South," *Southern Exposure* 8 (spring 1980): 3-8; Darryl Paulson, "Masters of it all: Black Builders In This Century," *Southern Exposure* 8 (spring

1980): 9-10; Catherine W. Bishir, "Black Builders in Antebellum North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review* 61, no. 4 (Oct. 1984); Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 32; Herbert Hill, *Black Labor and the American Legal System,* vol. 1, *Race, Work, and the Law* (Washington, DC: Bureau of National Affairs, 1977), 6-15; Herbert Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor: The Opposition to Affirmative Action," *New Politics,* n.s., 1, no. 2 (winter 1987): 45; Paul H. Buck, "The Poor Whites of the Ante-Bellum South," *American Historical Review* 31, no. 1 (Oct. 1925): 47, 49; and Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, *The Old South: The Founding of American Civilization* (New York: Scribner, 1942), 229-34. See also the list of slave bills of sale (including 18 Jewish buyers and/or sellers) compiled by Emily E. Vaughn, "South Carolina Bills of Sale, Skilled Slaves," October 2008, http://EmilyEVaughn.com/skilledslaves1.htm. South Carolina slaves were experienced in indigo cultivation and "sometimes supervised whole operations." David L. Coon, "Eliza Lucas Pinckney and the Reintroduction of Indigo Culture in South Carolina," *JSoHis* 42, no. 1 (Feb. 1976): 76. Also, "Travelers' Impressions of Slavery in America from 1750 to 1800," *JNH* 1, no. 4 (Oct. 1916). One quarter of the 35,000 American cowboys during the late 1800s were Black. See Kenneth Wiggins Porter, "Negro Labor in the Western Cattle Industry, 1866-1900," *Labor History* 10 (1969): 373-74; Roger D. Hardaway, "African American Cowboys on the Western Frontier," *Negro History Bulletin* (Jan.-Dec. 2001). Georgia-born Richard R. Wright, Jr., the Black sociologist, social worker, and minister of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, stated that he was 21 years old and in the northern metropolis of Chicago "before he had ever seen as many as a dozen white men at one time working on the streets, digging sewers or laying railroads." Wright, "The Negro in Unskilled Labor," 23.

1217 Greene et al., *Slave Badges*, 9, 20-21, passim; Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 22; Wertenbaker, *The Old South*, 233; Bayly E. Marks, "Skilled Blacks in Antebellum St. Mary's County, Maryland," *JSoHis* 53, no. 4 (Nov. 1987): 537-64; Leonard Stavisky, "The Origins of Negro Craftsmanship in Colonial America," *JNH* 32, no. 4 (Oct. 1947): 417-29; Ira Berlin and Herbert G. Gutman, "Natives and Immigrants, Free Men and Slaves," *American Historical Review* 88 (Dec. 1983): 1192; W.E.B. Du Bois, ed., *The Negro American Artisan,* Atlanta University Publications, no. 17 (1912; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1968), 28-32.

White Limits on Black Freedom

If Blacks after the Civil War harbored any delusion of post-plantation freedom and equality in the "white" sense, President Andrew Johnson's newly appointed governor of Florida, William Marvin, set them straight. He explained the government's position to a Black audience: "You must not think [that] because you are as free as white people you are their equal, because you are not." Their new "freedom," he explained, was an unintended by-product of the Civil War, which he accurately pointed out had been a "white man's war" from start to finish, fought entirely over the material and political interests of white men. He continued:

> Before the war, each of you was worth in dollars and cents to your owners, eight hundred or a thousand or fifteen hundred dollars, worth more than fifty acres, or eighty acres of land and a mule thrown in. Well, the President in giving you your freedom, has taken so many dollars and cents from your old masters, and he thinks as I do, they have lost enough, and you by it have had enough given to you.[1218]

This hostile and demeaning view of the Black man and woman, from a high official *in the party of Lincoln*, signaled the fact that any progress Blacks would make would be entirely on their own. Devoid of property, ninety percent illiterate, unorganized, and utterly friendless—but rich in enemies—Blacks had only their labor and their faith in God from which to draw sustenance and on which to build a new reality in the steadily expanding industrial

economy.

In the meantime, the hordes of European whites, who fully bought into the national postwar resentment toward the Black man and woman, felt entitled to *all* the jobs Blacks held. White laborers began to threaten and intimidate, with growing regularity and intensity, those enterprises that employed Blacks. They further recategorized the skilled occupations as "for whites only," while the unskilled work was deemed "nigger work," and they demanded that employers respect those racist definitions when hiring. As early as 1853 Frederick Douglass wrote that

> every hour sees the black man elbowed out of employment by some newly arrived immigrant, whose hunger and whose color are thought to give him a better title to place.[1219]

All across America the white immigrant pursued this program. In 1862, a group of white workers threatened to strike a tobacco factory in New York "unless all blacks were fired and no blacks would be hired in the future." In another instance, Irish longshoremen informed an employer that all Black workers must be dismissed or else they would disrupt shipping. And in this way ethnic whites began the racial cleansing of the American workplace, with the idea of procuring for themselves occupational security for the coming generations.[1220]

Blacks resisted this assault, and so did white employers, who actually *preferred* Black labor.[1221] Nonetheless, white immigrants were highly motivated in their drive to monopolize all skilled occupations, but they needed organization to fully

accomplish their goal of changing the racial complexion of the American labor force. Jews, as ancient builders of communal institutions and as acknowledged leaders of political movements, possessed the organizational skills needed to help in this cause.

1218 Thomas Wagstaff, "Call Your Old Master—'Master': Southern Political Leaders and Negro Labor During Presidential Reconstruction," *Labor History* 10, no. 3 (summer 1969): 323-24. Lincoln's secretary of state William H. Seward expressed similar views. See Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), 104-5, 117-20. Dattel (p. 261ff) establishes the fact that being an abolitionist or "anti-slavery" rarely, if ever, meant being for Black equality.

1219 David R. Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 72ff; Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 23; Herman Feldman, *Racial Factors in American Industry* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1931), 26-28; Bruce C. Levine and Eric Foner, *Half Slave and Half Free: The Roots of Civil War* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1992), 44-45; Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 51n.

1220 Robert Laurentz, "Racial/Ethnic Conflict in the New York City Garment Industry, 1933-1980" (Ph.D. diss., State Univ. of New York, 1980), 109n. Construction work came to be dominated by the ethnic whites, notably the Italians, Germans, and Irish.

1221 Paul B. Worthman, "Black Workers and Labor Unions in Birmingham, Alabama, 1897-1904," in *Black Labor in America,* ed. Milton Cantor (Westport, CT: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 58; Feldman, *Racial Factors in American Industry,* 26; Robert V. Bruce, *1877: Year of Violence* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1959), 293-94; "Negro Labor in Virginia," *NYT*, 8 July 1877, 9. Also, see Isabel Eaton's comments in W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (1899; reprint, Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 130-31n; Vernon Lane Wharton, *The Negro in Mississippi, 1865-1890* (1947; reprint, New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 121; Alrutheus Ambush Taylor, *The Negro in Tennessee, 1865-1880* (Washington, DC: Associated Publishers, 1941), 142-45, 153; Nate Shaw and Theodore Rosengarten, *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw* (New York: Knopf, 1974), 102, 488; John W. Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982), 115; Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), 4-5. In most cases, employers preferred Black laborers because of their skills and work habits, but some employer preference can be attributed in part to the Black man's inferior status in American law and custom, a position that made him especially exploitable.

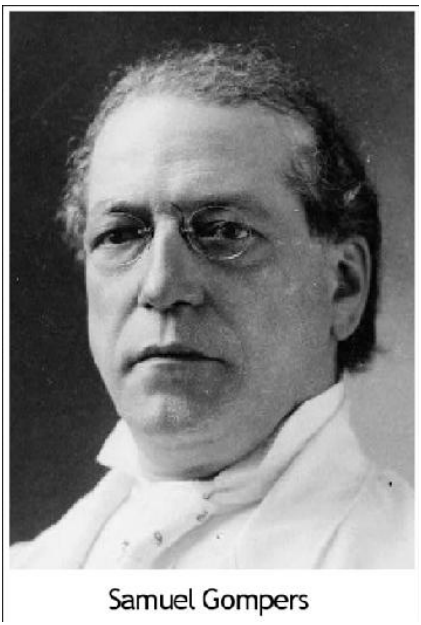
The Jewish Presence in the Early Labor Movement

[I] t is to [Samuel Gompers] , as much as to anyone else, that the American labor movement owes its structure and characteristic strategies.

—AFL-CIO web page

With the growing tide of European immigration came the concurrent demand for employment opportunities; thus, more formal efforts at unionizing began to take shape.[1222] This more strategic and methodical organization of the American workplace became known as the Labor (or Union) Movement. Initially, early labor organizers saw the necessity of organizing all workers regardless of race, more for the purpose of controlling, rather than protecting, Black labor. A segregated labor union, they believed, was inexpedient. If solely whites were unionized, employers would easily find a willing and able Black alternative to a disgruntled white work force, and Black strikebreakers would render impotent any white labor leverage. This concern was not mere speculation. In 1863, a strike by 3,000 white longshoremen in New York failed when Blacks were

hired to replace them. Strikes in Albany, Boston, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, and Detroit had similar outcomes and sometimes the tensions led to rioting. In 1866, white steamboat workers demanded a monthly wage of $100 but their employer instead hired 300 Blacks at $45 per month.[1223]



Samuel Gompers

The National Labor Union and the Knights of Labor set out to organize all workers by an egalitarian strategy. Both failed, however, unable to overcome the inbred racist proclivities of the white rank and file.[1224] "The anti-Negro feeling was so intense," wrote one historian, that at the Bricklayers' 1871 Convention "two New York locals fought openly against admission of Negroes…and even against the establishment of separate Negro locals." This widespread racial animus framed the 1880s emergence of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which would become the most

dominant labor organization in American history—entirely designed to serve the interests of the white man.

The AFL formed in 1886, with its leadership being the imported product of Jewish union activism in Europe.[1225] Despite their bitter experience under the yoke of European anti-Semitism, Jews quickly assumed the leadership of the American Labor Movement and helped to engineer the racial policies specifically designed to choke off the economic prospects of the Black laborer. Under Jewish founder and president Samuel Gompers, the AFL successfully bludgeoned industrialists into a whites-only hiring policy that would come to characterize the labor market for the next century.

So significant was Gompers, that the early years of American organized labor are considered, even by his detractors, to be the "Age of Samuel Gompers." From the 1880s to his last day on earth in 1924, the Jewish AFL founder exerted unparalleled influence over the shaping of American labor policies.[1226] By 1904, eighteen years after it was founded, the AFL claimed 1.7 of the two million total union members in the United States, and by the 1920s membership had exploded to five million. Jewish writers and historians have hailed his influence and power. Harry Golden called him "the father of American trade-unionism,"[1227] and Fred Greenbaum asserted that "[t]he social philosophy of Samuel Gompers helped shape American thought."[1228] According to Arthur Mann, "by the twentieth century few disputed his presumption to speak for all American labor." It was admiringly said of him that he "visited kings and generals, premiers and presidents"[1229] as the undisputed voice of the white workingman. It is

largely due to the influence of Samuel Gompers that every September America celebrates Labor Day.

1222 See Moses Rischin, "The Jewish Labor Movement in America: A Social Interpretation," *Labor History* 4, no. 3 (fall 1963): 229-30, esp. the sources in note 3.

1223 Marc Karson and Ronald Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker, 1894-1949," in *The Negro and the American Labor Movement*, ed. Julius Jacobson (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1968), 156. Employers sometimes needed only to threaten to bring in Black labor to accomplish the goal of keeping wages down. See Matison, "The Labor Movement and the Negro," 429; and Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 158. Also, Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1990), 27ff.

1224 Sidney H. Kessler, "The Organization of Negroes in the Knights of Labor," *JNH* 37, no. 3 (July 1952): 249; Kenneth Kann, "The Knights of Labor and the Southern Black Worker," *Labor History* 18 (1977); Matison, "The Labor Movement and the Negro," 428; Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 27; Herman D. Bloch, "Negroes and Organized Labor," *Journal of Human Relations* 10, no. 4 (summer 1962): 357-58; Herman D. Bloch, *The Circle of Discrimination: An Economic and Social Study of the Black Man in New York* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1969), 80-89; Harris, *The Harder We Run*, 25-27; August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, "Attitudes of Negro Leaders Toward the American Labor Movement From the Civil War to World War I," in *The Negro and the American Labor Movement*, ed. Julius Jacobson (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), 33; Leonard Rogoff, *Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2001), 45. Interracial labor coalitions were at times successful, as in the New Orleans General Strike of 1892, which enlisted 25,000 Black and white workers to paralyze the city for four days. See Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 30.

1225 According to J. Pfeffer, "It is generally acknowledged, moreover, that the Jews of the world over supply leaders for labor movements, especially for those of a radical nature." J. Pfeffer, ed., *Distinguished Jews of America,* vol. 1 (New York: Distinguished Jews of America, 1917), 173. Jewish economist Jacob N. Cardozo preferred Black slavery to immigrant labor because of the latter's alleged socialist tendencies (i.e. the propensity to organize labor). See Allen Kaufman, *Capitalism, Slavery, and Republican Values: Antebellum Political Economists, 1819-1848* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1982), 135; Melvin M. Leiman, *Jacob N. Cardozo: Economic Thought in the Antebellum South* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1966), 183. See also "Slavery and Secession," chap. 8 in *Jacob N. Cardozo*, 173-203, and passim. Also, see *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science*, vol. 16, *Essays on the American Jewish Labor Movement*, ed. Ezra Mendelsohn (New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research,1976).

1226 Harry Simonhoff, *Saga of American Jewry, 1865-1914* (New

York: Arco, 1959), 155.

1227 Harry Golden, *The Greatest Jewish City in the World* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972), 143.

1228 Fred Greenbaum, "The Social Ideas of Samuel Gompers," *Labor History* 7, no. 1 (winter 1966): 35.

1229 Arthur Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," *Antioch Review* 13 (spring 1953): 204. Gompers' power extended even into foreign and military policy. Simonhoff (*Saga of American Jewry,* 157) wrote, "More than anyone else [Gompers] induced organized labor to support the President's [World War I] war policy." Gompers died in December 1924 while attending the inauguration of the new president of Mexico. Simonhoff, *Saga of American Jewry,* 158.

Gompers' Final Solution: Removing the Black Worker

With Samuel Gompers as its president, the AFL's first impulse was to follow the original labor wisdom that subordinated racial exclusion to multicultural tolerance. Gompers refused to grant AFL membership to unions with overt provisions against the admission of Blacks. Said he:

> If we don't make friends of the colored man, he will of necessity be justified in proving himself our enemy. They will be utilized...to frustrate our every effort for economic, social and political improvement.[1230]

Economic pragmatism, rather than any pretense of brotherhood, motivated that short-lived orientation.[1231] Gompers coldly calculated that in the long run white racial unity could overcome any potential resistance by either Black workers or their advocates in industry; and starting about 1894, he began to mold the AFL into a true Aryan institution that made whiteness—*not skill or experience*—the premium qualification of labor union membership.[1232] And as union after union signed on to become affiliates under Gompers' AFL umbrella, they each began to reflect the Jewish leader's noxious racial values.

Gompers' most impressive talent in accomplishing this strategy was his artful demagoguery—that is, his harmonizing the union's flagrant racism with its historic motto of "solidarity forever."[1233] On the one hand, he publicly claimed that the AFL did not believe in discrimination[1234] but, on the other, there were no unions under

Gompers that allowed Black members. When the AFL did organize Blacks, it was solely for the purpose of neutralizing them during strikes. Blacks were corralled into separate subordinate unions under the complete control of the local white AFL affiliate.[1235] As Gompers saw it, he only wanted to "include them in order to control them."[1236] The Texas affiliate spoke for the union: "He [the Black worker] must be taken in and dominated in a friendly way or he must be kicked out and fought."[1237]

Gompers had potential affiliate unions expunge racially restrictive language from their constitutions, but at the same time he, duplicitously, advised them to ban Blacks surreptitiously through their private membership rituals. These "unwritten" methods included high initiation fees, examinations designed to fail Black applicants, the requiring of special licenses to work that were unobtainable by Blacks, and restrictions on apprenticeship programs.[1238] But over time AFL officials no longer bothered to request that applicants abide by this subterfuge and thus admitted unions that openly and unapologetically excluded Blacks.[1239]

When absolutely necessary, such as in occupations and locations where Blacks were concentrated in large numbers, the AFL approved the membership of strictly segregated unions. But, as always, this proved to be nothing more than an attempt to control Black workers, not an attempt to advance their status.[1240] Some segregated Black locals were allowed a charter, but contracts the AFL negotiated with local businesses required that companies hire solely from the white local.[1241] The imposition of trade licenses (for plumbing, carpentry, etc.), issued by boards on which white

AFL members sat, had the intended effect of further excluding Black artisans and tradesmen. In 1905, an AFL official admitted that the intention of such methods was to "entirely eliminate" the Black artisan from the crafts.[1242]

Under Gompers, AFL unions became the "instrument of white working class racism," and began systematically forcing Black workers out of a variety of occupations they once dominated. Labor scholar Herbert Hill counted at least fifty strikes between 1882 and 1900 by white men against the hiring of Blacks. Black dockworkers in New Orleans, for instance, were driven out of those jobs "at the muzzles of loaded rifles." White train workers in Texas demanded in 1890 that all Black workers be replaced by whites. In 1909, white train workers struck against Georgia Railroad, demanding the exclusion of Black firemen. Ten Blacks were murdered in a 1911 strike to remove Blacks from other railroad companies. In other areas like blacksmithing, Blacks, if not totally removed, were forced into the dirtier, unskilled areas of the field.

AFL unions refused to admit Blacks into training and apprenticeship programs, so Blacks could not pass on viable trade skills to future generations. When Blacks could not be excluded from union contracts altogether, the AFL established racially separate lines of seniority for job promotions. As James Weldon Johnson once said: "it is true that the black worker finds getting into most of the white labor unions no easier than getting an invitation to a white bourgeois dinner party."[1243]

In Cleveland, fully one-third of Black males were employed in the skilled trades in 1870; that number had dropped to one in ten by 1910. The 3,460 Black tradesmen in New Orleans in 1870 had been reduced to fewer than 350 by 1904—even

though the Black population had increased in that city by more than 50 percent. The same pattern of occupational eviction existed throughout the nation, its intensity mirroring the flow of European immigrants into the nation and into the workforce. And unions dominated by Jewish laborers were no different. The painters, the garment makers, the cigar rollers, and the waiters were largely made up of Jews, and—just like their white ethnic colleagues—all excluded "nonwhites."[1244]

1230 Bloch, *Circle of Discrimination*, 90-91; Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 28; Eli Ginzberg and Alfred S. Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence: American Democracy and the Negro* (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), 246; Bernard Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers, 1886-1914," *JNH* 40, no. 1 (Jan. 1955): 34, 35, 36, 38-41, 60.

1231 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 156.

1232 Ibid., 155. See "Hearings Before the Industrial Commission: Testimony of Mr. Samuel Gompers, President, American Federation of Labor, Washington, D. C., April 18, 1900," in *The Black Worker During the Era of the American Federation of Labor and the Railroad Brotherhoods*, vol. 4 of *The Black Worker: A Documentary History from Colonial Times to the Present*, eds. Philip S. Foner and Ronald L. Lewis (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1979), 325; Will Chasan, *Samuel Gompers: Leader of American Labor* (New York: Praeger, 1971), 83; Herbert R. Northrup, "Race Discrimination in Trade Unions: The Record and the Outlook," *Commentary* 2 (1946): 129. Northrup also points out (p. 128) that "Discrimination against Jews by trade unions is quite uncommon." Ginzberg and Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence,* 246, 247.

1233 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 156.

1234 "Testimony of Mr. Samuel Gompers," 325.

1235 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 155, 157; Herbert Hill, "Labor Unions and the Negro: The Record of Discrimination," *Commentary* 28 (1959): 481; Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 52-53.

1236 Bloch, *Circle of Discrimination*, 93, 94, 95.

1237 Eric Arnesen, "Following the Color Line of Labor: Black Workers and the Labor Movement before 1930," *Radical History Review* 55 (1993): 59; Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 47, 50.

1238 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 157-58; Ginzberg and Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence,* 247. Gompers' discriminatory policies even predated the

Plessy vs. Ferguson Supreme Court decision of 1896, which encoded into law the "separate but equal" policies. See also David E. Bernstein, *Only One Place of Redress: African Americans, Labor Regulations, and the Courts from Reconstruction to the New Deal* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 2001), 29-45; Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 49.

1239 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 28-31; Hill, *Black Labor and the American Legal System*, 19-23; Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 155-58; Ginzberg and Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence,* 247; Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 36-37; Herbert R. Northrup, *Organized Labor and the Negro* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1944), 8; Bloch, *Circle of Discrimination*, 79. Also, Gompers "personally assured" the Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen that he would not force them to admit Blacks. See Lewis L. Lorwin, *The American Federation of Labor* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1933), 197. See the editorial cartoon addressing this discrimination in the NAACP's *Crisis,* March 1934, 73.

1240 See Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 52-53; Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 34; Reginald Kennedy, "Negro Labor and the Union," *Interracial Review* 10, no. 1 (Jan. 1937): 11.

1241 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 29, 31-32; Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 53; Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 29.

1242 Northrup, *Organized Labor and the Negro*, 17; Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 29; Robert H. Zieger, *For Jobs and Freedom: Race and Labor in America Since 1865* (Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2007), 64.

1243 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 32-33, 37-38; Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 35, 36, 46; Herbert Hill, "Herbert Hill Replies," *New Politics,* n.s., 1, no. 3 (summer 1987): 68. Also, Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, 126-28; Johnson, *Along This Way*, 45.

1244 Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 50-52, 53-67; Rayford W. Logan, *Betrayal of the Negro: From Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (1965; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1997), 150-56; Steven S. Schwarzschild, "American History Marked by Racism," *New Politics,* n.s., 1, no. 3 (summer 1987): 57-58.

Gompers' Racial Hatred

The most accomplished and admirable Jew in American history, to judge by his contributions to democracy and social justice, was surely Samuel Gompers…

—Paul Berman, *A Living Lens*

Samuel Gompers harbored an animus toward the Black man that was not only programmatic but personal. He admitted that the industrialists he battled for more workers' rights cared little about their workers' race and more about their productivity, so his racist policies could not have been driven by the demands of the workplace. Not only that, another important labor organization, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), specifically promoted more liberal racial policies and were gaining some success.[1245]

Gompers took delight in telling racist stories in his public addresses and referred to Blacks as superstitious, dull, ignorant, happy-go-lucky, irresponsible, lazy, immoral "darkies."[1246] He warned America of the "hordes of ignorant blacks," who were "huge, strapping fellows, ignorant and

vicious, whose predominating trait was animalism."[1247] His *American Federationist* newspaper, the official organ of the AFL, claimed that Blacks did not possess such noble characteristics as patriotism, sympathy, and sacrifice, which, it maintained, "are peculiar to most of the Caucasian race." The AFL even proposed its own Final Solution, asserting that Black colonization in Cuba or Liberia "would be a practical and mutually agreeable solution of the Negro-labor problem."[1248] According to historian Gerald Emanuel Stearn:

> Gompers was more than a prejudiced observer; he was a bigot….[H]e taunted Negro[e]s, in the *Federationist* and in his speeches, with the common, demeaning epithets of the day....[H]e joined with some of the more virulent race baiters of the day in questioning the humanity of any other than white men….[He] never entertained the thought of anything approaching social equality [for Blacks].[1249]

The union leader pined for the old days when "there was a general understanding of the principle that the maintenance of the nation depended upon the maintenance of racial purity and strength."[1250] His personal life was consistent with his national profile. When the white citizens of the District of Columbia asserted their right to draw the color line against Black home ownership in their neighborhoods, fellow resident Samuel Gompers contributed money to wage the legal battle.[1251]

According to Jewish labor historian Herbert Hill, Gompers became "the major spokesman for concepts of racial and national superiority within

organized labor." By September 1905, Gompers' hatred was unrestrained; sounding more Hitlerian than Hebrew, he wrote:

> [I]f the colored man continues to lend himself to the work of tearing down what the white man has built up, a race hatred far worse than any ever known will result. Caucasian civilization will serve notice that its uplifting process is not to be interfered with in any way.[1252]

Gompers was actually equating the Black man's desire to earn an honorable living in the skilled trades with the "tearing down" of white society. He assured his troops that "The Caucasians are not going to let their standard of living be destroyed by negroes, Chinamen, Japs or any others."[1253] His unmistakable call to reorganize the American working class along purely racial lines put the Jewish labor leader in perfect philosophical harmony with the Ku Klux Klan.

1245 The IWW formed in 1905, but it was targeted for destruction by the United States government in much the same way as the F.B.I.'s COINTELPRO would later target Black organizations. See Philip S. Foner, "The IWW and the Black Worker," *JNH* 55, no. 1 (Jan. 1970): 45-64. The IWW ultimately succumbed to the forces of American white supremacy.

1246 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 158-59.

1247 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 39; Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 47. See also "Testimony of Mr. Samuel Gompers," 325; "Gompers Draws Color Line: Believes Caucasians Should Maintain Supremacy in the Labor Unions," *NYT*, 19 Nov. 1910, 4.

1248 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 38; Ginzberg and Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence*, 250; Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 47; Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 43.

1249 Gerald Emanuel Stearn, ed., *Gompers* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 44-45. It was yet asserted that Gompers was "a man with the gift of conciliation—an ultimate quality in a good

leader." See Joseph G. Rayback, review of *Samuel Gompers and Organized Labor in America*, by Harold C. Livesay, *Labor History* 20, no. 4 (fall 1979): 596; Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 158.

1250 Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1971), 278; Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 212. See also Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 39; Herbert Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation and the Rise of Working-Class Racism," *Society,* January/February 1973, 46; Hill, "Labor Unions and the Negro," 480; Greenbaum, "The Social Ideas of Samuel Gompers," 43.

1251 "To Prevent Negro Owners," *NYT*, 4 Oct. 1907, 7.

1252 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 46, 51; Hill, "Labor Unions and the Negro," 481; Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 39, 41. A publication of the American Jewish Historical Society clearly states: "The philosophy and program of the American labor movement was formulated by Samuel Gompers and his close associates in the 1880's and 1890's…" See Selig Perlman, "America and the Jewish Labor Movement: A Case of Mutual Illumination," in *The Writing of American Jewish History,* eds. Moshe Davis and Isidore S. Meyer (New York: American Jewish Historical Society, 1957), 223.

1253 Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 43.

Gompers and His Southern Labor Policy

Among the many powerful factions in America with vested interests in the Southern economy, there was unprecedented agreement about the utility of the Black man. His emancipation was analogous to the sudden closing of a major factory in a company town—the well-being of the entire American economy and, thus, the very security of the nation were at stake. The politicians, the business elite, and their presumed adversary Big Labor all were in accord over these two issues—that all of the new jobs being created by America's industrialization would be filled by white workers and that the Black man's only acceptable place was on the plantation, once again driving the economy as non-voting, low-wage-earning, *non-striking* second-class citizens. It was further agreed that the imposition of this Black containment policy was the general responsibility of the Caucasian and that this could be done by any means, including by fraud or by force, and justified by the imperialistic doctrine of Manifest Destiny.[1254]

Gompers' AFL eagerly embraced this American Nazism and assumed a prominent role in its administration. According to historians Meier and Rudwick, "AFL leaders considered the Negro migration from the South a source of 'anxiety' and 'danger,'" so the repressive attempts by the planter establishment to keep Blacks in the South served the purposes of Big Labor.[1255]

The Southern state legislators did their part, passing laws to accomplish these specific goals.[1256] The South Carolina senate crushed all possibilities of Blacks forming unions when it passed a bill making it a crime for anybody to interfere "with any contract between any employer or employee,

whether such contract be verbal or in writing."[1257] A similar law provided that no "freedman" could ply a trade as an artisan, mechanic, or shopkeeper without obtaining a license each year from the local judge, or he'd face a year's imprisonment.[1258] Ultimately, the discriminatory policies pursued by Gompers' union movement made it unnecessary for lawmakers in the Southern states to enact an entire range of labor-related Jim Crow legislation—a mighty service to white supremacy by any measure.

By these and other methods, unionization (or any form of organization) was denied to Blacks. Incredibly, the AFL never protested these clear anti-union measures; nor did it seek their repeal. Originally the AFL plan was to limit union organizing to the North, the main port of entry for European immigrants, and not organize the South, where 90 percent of American Blacks were concentrated. But as the mainly agrarian plantation South became industrialized, it did unionize, with the unions not only acceding fully to Southern racial traditions but also recruiting many Ku Klux Klan members, who influenced union activity throughout the 20th century.[1259]

When asked why the South had not been organized, Gompers gave three reasons, the first being "the fault of the Negroes."[1260] In 1917, the AFL annual convention rejected a resolution denouncing a litany of discriminations against Blacks in America.[1261] Gompers rebuked Blacks for being "cheap workers" and for demanding "special privileges." He decried the use of white children as factory workers, claiming it could make them degenerate and illiterate. But Black children working in the factories, he thought, would be advancing their education.[1262]

1254 Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 50. Ibid.,

49. "…but the moment he [the Black man] assumes or demands any other relationship or stands up as an independent citizen, the white men—at least some white men—turn upon him with the fiercest hostility." See Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Colour Line: An Account of Negro Citizenship in the American Democracy* (New York: Doubleday, 1908), 38, and 80: "'There are farmers that would not hesitate to shoot their brother were he to come from Mississippi to get "his niggers," as he calls them, even though he had no contract with them.'" See also Arnesen, "Following the Color Line of Labor," 53ff; Bernstein, *Only One Place of Redress*, 8-27; Irving Kovarsky and William Albrecht, *Black Employment: The Impact of Religion, Economic Theory, Politics, and Law* (Ames, IA: Iowa State Univ. Press, 1970), 39-40; W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Economic Future of the Negro," *Publications of the American Economic Association*, 3d ser., 7, no. 1 (Feb. 1906): 224-26, 238-39; Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 107-10, 211, 224, and passim.

1255 Meier and Rudwick, "Attitudes of Negro Leaders Toward the American Labor Movement," 46. In at least one Southern territory, there was a standing order to "shoot on the spot any '*nigger*' about to leave." See Frederick Trautmann, ed., *Travels on the Lower Mississippi, 1879-1880: A Memoir by Ernst von Hesse-Wartegg* (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1990), 103-6; Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America*, 253-82.

1256 Jennifer Roback, "Southern Labor Law in the Jim Crow Era: Exploitative or Competitive?" *University of Chicago Law Review* 51, no. 4 (autumn 1984): 1161-1192.

1257 The actual wording of the law carries no racial connotation, though it gives to Southern authorities wide latitude in its application in order to accomplish the law's unexpressed racial goals. This is how many laws were crafted in Jim Crow America (and even today) in order to maintain white supremacy while technically eluding the charge of racism. See Kessler, "The Organization of Negroes in the Knights of Labor," 265; and William Cohen, *At Freedom's Edge: Black Mobility and the Southern White Quest for Racial Control, 1861-1915* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1991), 30-31. By this subterfuge the succeeding AFL president, William Green, could utter preposterous nonsense such as this in 1939:

> I am proud to be able to report that no iota of race hatred has been able to penetrate the American labor movement. From the beginning the American Federation of Labor resolved that it would permit no racial or religious prejudices to stultify its united drive for improving the conditions of American workers. We have always taken the lead in fighting for the protection of racial and religious minorities in this country.…We always shall.

See League of American Writers, *"We Hold These Truths...": Statements on Anti-Semitism by 54 Leading American Writers, Statesmen, Educators, Clergymen and Trade-Unionists* (New York, 1939), 51. See also Bernstein, *Only One Place of Redress*; Hill, *Black Labor and the*

American Legal System, 15-16; and "Warns Negro Labor on 'Red' Congress," *NYT*, 10 Aug. 1925, 14, which reports Green's attempts to intimidate Blacks from organizing.

1258 Wayne K. Durrill, "The South Carolina Black Code," in *True Stories From the American Past,* ed. William Graebner (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 12.

1259 See Sterling D. Spero and Abram L. Harris, *The Black Worker: The Negro and the Labor Movement* (New York: Atheneum, 1959), 370-71. Eventually, according to Herbert Hill, the Klan and the White Citizens Councils "moved into many local unions and made them, in effect, virtual extensions of segregationist organizations." See his "Racism Within Organized Labor: A Report of Five Years of the AFL-CIO, 1955-1960," *Journal of Negro Education* 30, no. 2 (spring 1961): 110.

1260 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 38-39; Ginzberg and Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence*, 250; Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 27-28; Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 156-57. See Herbert Shapiro's review of *Samuel Gompers, A Biography*, by Bernard Mandel [*JNH* 50, no. 4 (Oct. 1965): 283-84], which says that the Jewish labor leader "was blatantly racist" and

> made peace with segregation and anti-Negro discrimination, blaming the failure of unions to organize Negro workers upon Negroes themselves and failing to recognize that Jim Crow policies had something to do with the problem.

1261 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 158-60. These authors erroneously state that Gompers was "utterly and completely silent" on the issues of disfranchisement, lynchings, exclusion from jury duty, segregation in schools, colleges, railroads, and other places, when he in fact energetically endorsed them.

1262 Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 48-49, 59.

Violence, Murder, Massacres, & Pogroms

Samuel Gompers proved willing to use violence to accomplish his aim to remove Blacks from the American workforce.[1263] In East St. Louis in 1917, striking whites under Gompers charged that the hiring of Black strike-breakers "has reached the point where drastic action must be taken...to get rid of a certain portion of those who are already here."

Within a week whites rampaged in an orgy of bloody violence that included random lynchings, stonings, shootings, rapes, amputations, human torchings, house burnings, iron-pipe beatings, and axe-murders, culminating in the killing of more than 200 Blacks and eight whites, the destruction of $7 million in property, and the fleeing of at least 10,000 Blacks from their homes. One arrested man was heard to say, "I've killed my share of niggers today. I have killed so many I am tired and somebody else can finish them."[1264] The *St. Louis Star* reported that

> Negroes were "flushed" from the burning houses, and ran for their lives, screaming and begging for mercy....Rioters formed in gangs and trooped through the streets, chasing Negroes. They stood around in groups, laughing and jeering while they witnessed the final writhings of the terror and pain-racked wretches who crawled to the streets to die after their flesh had been cooked in their own homes....[1265]

According to Herbert Hill, "trade union provocation was a major factor" in the massacre. Former President Theodore Roosevelt harshly criticized the rioters, asserting that "there was no

justification and no provocation" for the violence, which he said "was waged with such appalling fatality as to leave an indelible stigma upon the American name." But Samuel Gompers defended the mass murder and the murderers, pinning the blame on the capitalists of St. Louis, who, he said, had been "luring colored men into that city to supplant white labor." The murderers, of course, targeted and killed no "capitalists" in their rampage, but that didn't concern Gompers. Roosevelt responded disgustedly and alluded to Gompers' own heritage:

> In the past I have had to listen too often to the same kind of apologies for the murders committed against the Armenians and the Jews....I say to you, sir, that there can be no justification, no apology for such gross atrocities....[1266]

The NAACP's W.E.B. Du Bois investigated the pogrom of East St. Louis and declared that it was *"engineered by Gompers and his Trade Unions."* He concluded that the massacre

> brought the most unwilling of us to acknowledge that in the present Union movement, as represented by the AFL, there is absolutely no hope of justice for an American of Negro descent.[1267]

The charge made by America's leading Black intellectual and activist could not have been clearer —that the most prominent and powerful Jew in America had "engineered" a massacre of scores of innocent Blacks.[1268]

This new American movement, then, with its Jewish directorship, was intentionally designed to

effect no less than a racial cleansing of the job market. By the end of the 1890s American Blacks—who once did virtually all the work[1269]—had been forced out of most occupations and into the most demeaning, most dangerous, and dirtiest jobs, often living as near chattel in the feudal mining camps, timber yards, and plantation hovels. Herbert Hill addressed the "process of Negro displacement":

> Labor unions frequently were the instrument that forced Negro workers out of the jobs they had held for many years by replacing them with white workers after union organization.[1270]

Union policies and practices were "most significantly responsible for the systematic reduction of black representation in the trades."[1271] Hill wrote that organized labor was a "decisive factor in the barring of Negroes from full and equal participation in the economic life of the nation."[1272] Columbia University economist George Sinclair Mitchell noted in 1936 that

> Southern trade unionism of the last thirty-odd years has been in good measure a protective device for the march of white artisans into places held by Negroes. The white worker and his trade union displaced black labor on street railways, removed Negro firemen on railroads, took the jobs of colored switchmen and shopworkers and replaced Negroes in construction work and shipbuilding and forced them out of hotel service and barbering.[1273]

Dr. Stanford M. Lyman wrote that organized

labor "has worked from its inception, first to evict, then to restrict, and finally to restrain black working men and women from occupational advancement."[1274] Thus, Gompers' ability to remove Blacks permanently from gainful employment on a national scale represented a far greater assault on Black progress than any midnight raid of the Ku Klux Klan. For the newly freed American Blacks, the "Age of Gompers"—a movement that was significantly in Jewish hands—was simply the institutionalization of American white supremacy.

1263 T. S. Adams, "Violence in Labor Disputes," *Publications of the American Economic Association*, 3d ser., 7, no. 1 (Feb. 1906): 176-206. According to David M. Parry, president of the National Association of Manufacturers in 1903:

> Organized labor knows but one law, and that is the law of physical force—the law of the Huns and Vandals, the law of the savage. All its purposes are accomplished either by actual force or by the threat of force.

See ibid., 176. Labor leaders vigorously disputed this assessment, but figures gathered for the two-and-a-half-year period between 1902 and 1904 reveal 180 persons were killed, 1,651 were injured, and 5,533 were arrested in labor-related violence. See ibid., 177. Also, Robin D. G. Kelley, "'We Are Not What We Seem': Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *JAH* 80, no. 1 (June 1993): 99-102.

1264 "Killed So Many Men, He Was All Tired," *Lexington Herald*, 11 July 1917, 1; Meier and Rudwick, "Attitudes of Negro Leaders Toward the American Labor Movement," 46-47. See also Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 29; Hill, "Labor Unions and the Negro," 481-82; David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868-1919* (New York: H. Holt, 1993), 536-40.

1265 Hill, "Labor Unions and the Negro," 481.

1266 Ibid., 482. See also Elliott M. Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1964), 134; *NYT*, 6 July 1917, 11.

1267 Meier and Rudwick, "Attitudes of Negro Leaders Toward the American Labor Movement," 27-28, 47; Eric Arnesen, ed., *Black Protest and the Great Migration: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003), 78-83; Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis*.

1268 In 1919, just after World War I had ended, the AFL denounced "the massacres and brutalities committed upon the Jewish populations of Poland, the Ukraine and other parts of eastern Europe," characterizing them as "inhuman deeds" that deny "full

civil and political rights and protection" to the Jews as a national minority. See Sheila Stern Polishook, "The American Federation of Labor, Zionism, and the First World War," *AJHQ* 65, no. 3 (March 1976): 230-31.

1269 See Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery* (New York: Random House, Ballantine Books, 2005).

1270 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 33-34. Herbert Hill, a Jew, was professor of Afro-American Studies and Industrial Relations, University of Wisconsin at Madison, and author of several articles exposing the racist character of the Labor Movement. He was the NAACP's labor representative and his work fueled the group's labor activism. For his work Hill was attacked and attempts were made to restrict his ability to publish his findings. In 1965, the Jewish managing editor of *Labor History*, Milton Cantor, first agreed to print Hill's article, but shortly after, the journal's editorial board reversed that decision. After missing two appointments with Hill to discuss the matter Cantor wrote: "I am sorry about my inability to keep our agreed-upon appointment. By now my apologies must be as meaningless as my good name; but all I can do is offer regrets." The article was published instead in *New Politics* (1965), where Hill revealed (p. 26.) the effort to censor him at *Labor History*. Moreover, Hill was actually called "anti-Semitic" by another pro-labor Jewish writer. See Paul Jacobs, "No More Cousin Toms! The Clash Between the Unions and the Negroes," *Dissent* 10, no. 1 (winter 1963): 10. See also Hill's role opposing a "reverse discrimination" claim promoted by the Anti-Defamation League, in *Job Bias,* ed. Lester A. Sobel (New York: Facts on File, 1976), 82, and also 141.

1271 Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 26-27, 33; Northrup, *Organized Labor and the Negro*, 17; Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 32-33.

1272 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 38; Hill, *Black Labor and the American Legal System*, 16-23. The racist violence initiated by the Gompers-led AFL often resulted in the expulsion of Blacks from their homes and communities. See James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: New Press, 2005), 163ff.

1273 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 34.

1274 Stanford M. Lyman, review of *Black Labor and the American Legal System,* vol. 1, *Race, Work, and the Law,* by Herbert Hill, *Labor History* 20, no. 4 (fall 1979): 612-13.

Black Leaders and the AFL

[The Black man's]
greatest enemy is the
trade union.

—
W.E.B.
Du
Bois,
1906

Black leaders felt virtually helpless in overcoming Gompers' assault on the Black workingman. W.E.B. Du Bois pleaded for equal opportunity for the "colored workmen." In 1902, he asked Gompers to respond to an article he was writing chronicling the racial history of the AFL. Gompers' reply was thoroughly arrogant, dismissive, and annoyed:

> [Y]ou are…unwilling to give credit where credit is due….Let me say further, that I have more important work to attend to than correct "copy" for your paper.[1275]

Over a decade later, Du Bois wrote again that the AFL "systematically and deliberately excludes every Negro that it dares from membership no matter what his qualifications." By then Gompers' power was so absolute that Du Bois's own rebuke of the union had to be written on paper carrying that union's label.[1276] Exasperated, Du Bois finally declared that the AFL treated the Black worker as

"half a man," whose only opportunities lay in strikebreaking.[1277]

Other Black leaders and newspapers also condemned the union movement in the strongest terms. In 1899, an Indiana leader declared trade unionism to be the "greatest enemy of the Negro." A 1903 editorial in *The Colored American* said of the white immigrants that "The first thing they do after landing…is to organize to keep the colored man out of…all kinds of industries of the country." The *New York Age* predicted that calamities would befall America for these policies, and in 1902 future Garveyite journalist J.E. Bruce summed up Gompers' racial policy:

> [The unions are] a gigantic closed corporation—a greedy, grasping, ruthless, intolerant, overbearing, dictatorial combination of half-educated white men….I am against them because they are against the Negro.[1278]

Booker T. Washington charged that the Jim Crow policies of labor unions had crippled the economic advancement of Blacks. Unrepentant, the AFL sharply criticized Washington's views at its 1897 convention. In 1905, the Niagara movement addressed the anti-Black nature of trade unionism but was largely ignored. Its direct descendant, the NAACP, formed in 1909 and urged that Blacks find solidarity with the white working class, even while it complained that discrimination "was crushing and keeping down the Negro competitors of white workers." Gompers showed "little sympathy" toward the NAACP's overtures.[1279]

During the 1910 AFL convention, Gompers was quoted as having "read the negro out of the labor

movement." The resulting uproar from Black leaders, including Washington, caused Gompers to claim he had been misquoted, but his "correction" was more racist than his original statement. "[I]t was difficult to organize Negro workers," he explained,

> because, being only half a century removed from slavery, they did not have the same conception of their rights and duties as did the white workers and were unprepared for fully exercising and enjoying the possibilities existing in trade unionism.[1280]

When Gompers did attempt to organize certain Black workers, he hired just two Black organizers but found fault with the work of both.[1281] During the First World War a group of Black leaders met with the AFL officials to complain of their policies. Gompers merely brushed them off, and his administration reported that "it could find no fault with the past work of the Federation."[1282]

Ultimately, neither Washington nor Du Bois fully understood the power of the labor unions and their role in the economic plight of America's Blacks. Neither formed policies or positions that attempted to counteract the devastating effects of Gompers' union movement,[1283] and Washington publicly held hopes that, in retrospect, can only be seen as chillingly naïve:

> [S]o far as the labor unions are concerned, I am convinced that these organizations can and will become an important means of doing away with the prejudice that now exists in many parts of the country against the Negro laborer.

> I believe that they will do this not merely, as Mr. Gompers has said, from "principle," but because it is to their interest to do so.[1284]

1275 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 34-35; Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 55. For statistics on union membership see Gerald N. Grob, "Organized Labor and the Negro Worker, 1865-1900," *Labor History* 1, no. 2 (spring 1960): 174. By 1902, Du Bois reported that forty-three internationals had no Black members and that twenty-seven additional unions had a trace number of Blacks. See Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 34; Du Bois, *The Negro American Artisan*, 82-114.

1276 Stearn, *Gompers,* 44.

1277 Meier and Rudwick, "Attitudes of Negro Leaders Toward the American Labor Movement," 45; Ginzberg and Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence*, 249; Kessler, "The Organization of Negroes in the Knights of Labor," 254-55, and 253: "strikebreaking afforded a first opportunity for [Black] entrance into some occupations." For instance, in a field dominated by Jewish workers and management—the apparel industry—Blacks could only enter as strikebreakers. See Elaine Gale Wrong, *The Negro in the Apparel Industry* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1974), 28; Hill, "Labor Unions and the Negro," 482n. Spero and Harris, *The Black Worker,* 128-46, 337-39, report that the influx began in Chicago during 1917 when lower-wage-earning Black women were brought in to break a strike. When the strike ended, some five hundred of the women found permanent places in the trade. The same occurred in Philadelphia in 1912 after a strike by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Thirty thousand Black strikebreakers "undermined morale" in the 1919 steel workers' strike in Pittsburgh. See Lorwin, *The American Federation of Labor*, 183; Joel Seidman, *The Needle Trades* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1942), 38; Booker T. Washington, "The Negro and the Labor Unions," *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1913, 757-58; Robert Higgs, *Competition and Coercion: Blacks in the American Economy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), 85-86; Arnesen, "Following the Color Line of Labor," 58, 78.

1278 Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 52.

1279 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 31; Ginzberg and Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence*, 248; Washington, "The Negro and the Labor Unions," 756-67; Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 45, 55-57.

1280 Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 56. Mandel points out (pp. 56-57 n. 58) that Gompers believed in 1915 that "there are now two great groups of exploited workers in the United States—immigrants and women," ignoring Blacks altogether. More significant is the fact that Gompers devoted only two sentences to the subject in his 1,100-page autobiography, in which he blithely affirms the right of Blacks to organize. Samuel Gompers, *Seventy*

Years of Life and Labor: An Autobiography, vol. 1 (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1925), 364. See also Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 160.

1281 Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 43.

1282 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 160; Arnesen, "Following the Color Line of Labor," 75, 77: Resolutions "carried no weight" with AFL affiliates and Gompers deferred to local unions "at the expense of anything approaching racial justice." The AFL's treatment of Blacks "made a mockery of the movement's lofty rhetoric of working-class unity and dignity."

1283 Meier and Rudwick, "Attitudes of Negro Leaders Toward the American Labor Movement," 40.

1284 Washington, "The Negro and the Labor Unions," 767; "Negro's Chance to Work," *NYT,* 14 July 1903, 1.

"The Federation is a White Man's Organization": The Lasting Effects of Gompers' Racial Policies[1285]

Negro and Puerto Rican workers are the victims of a broad pattern of racial discrimination and segregation.... there is a direct connection between the permanent condition of poverty experienced by these workers and discriminatory racial practices.

—

Herbert Hill, testimony before U.S. Congress, 1963

The Black struggle in America is associated mostly with the battles that were waged against the indignities of segregated buses, lunch counters, drinking fountains, waiting rooms, and theatre seating. But these sins actually paled in comparison to the American union movement's wholesale destruction of the Black man and woman's wage-

earning capability. The long-term effect of the union/labor movement's policies on the Black condition is the hidden story of racism in America.

Blacks were in a no-win situation. The AFL excluded Blacks, but then derided them as "negro strikebreakers" and "scabs" when they sought employment through other means. Capitulating to the demands of Gompers, the major American industries had to accept union laborers under union rules and often under threat of union violence and sabotage. Even if an individual employer wanted to hire Blacks and move them into higher positions on an equal basis with whites, he was subject to union boycotts and strikes. As unionism grew in America, Black options for gainful employment decreased in direct proportion.

As a direct and irrefutable result of the American union movement, massive numbers of Blacks were trapped in a condition of marginal economic existence, where employment opportunities were limited largely to menial, unskilled, often seasonal, jobs found at the very margins of America's expanding trade and industry. The ability of Black men, then, to support families and strengthen their communities was totally undermined. Black women were forced into the labor market as maids and caretakers in white homes because their Black husbands were limited to work in the lowest-paying occupations. Between 1890 and 1920 the number of white female domestic servants declined by one-third, while Black women domestics increased by 43 percent—a direct reflection of the loss of opportunity for Blacks and the consequent enrichment of whites. By 1910, Black women were only ten percent of the American female population but 25 percent of the female labor force.[1286] The resultant community

deterioration that accompanied this economic trauma is still evident throughout Black America.[1287]

Early in his career Gompers himself described the condition Blacks would face if not allowed to organize with all workers, and his assessment was both disturbing and prophetic:

> If the colored man is not permitted to organize, if he is not given the opportunity to protect and defend his interests, if a chance is not given him by which he could uplift his condition, the inevitable result must follow, that he will sink down lower and lower in his economic scale and in his conception of his rights as a worker and finally find himself...absolutely dependent (worse than chattel slavery) in the hands of unfair and unscrupulous employers.[1288]

Gompers and his American Federation of Labor actually engineered this outcome with prior, articulated knowledge of the "inevitable result." It cannot be claimed that the degraded socio-economic condition of Blacks was an unfortunate, unforeseen by-product of the American Labor Movement.

The short-term effect of Gompers' racial policies was dramatic. Blacks did not just lose jobs—they lost entire occupations, the percentage of Black workers declining precipitously in many trades.[1289] Occupational data for the period 1890–1930 show that Blacks made virtually no inroads into plumbing, carpentry and painting, even though they had once dominated those trades. No significant gains were registered by Blacks in either

professional or technical occupations, remaining between 1.4% and 2.1% from 1910 to 1930.[1290] As the number of mills in the South more than doubled between 1880 and 1900, the jobs went to white workers, including many women and children who left small farms for factory work. Most spinners and weavers had been Black before the Civil War, but by 1900 Blacks made up less than 2 percent of the labor force in textile mills.[1291] All the while, there continued unabated actions like those of the 120-store Jacob Drug Company in Atlanta, which fired all its 230 Black messengers in 1929 in order to replace them with less-qualified whites at higher wages.[1292]

A measure of the extent of the harm done to Black economic aspirations is in a simple statistic. In 1900, there were 8,000 automobiles in America. By 1931 there were 26 million.[1293] The wealth generated by this incredible industrial revolution eluded the Black community almost entirely, while native whites and European immigrants snatched all of the significant manufacturing jobs, securing the future of their families and children for generations to come.

The largest public works project since the construction of the pyramids of Egypt entailed the building of New York state's expressways, bridges, parkways, housing projects, playgrounds, parks, zoos, golf courses, beaches, and even the dam at Niagara Falls. And Blacks were almost entirely excluded from working on the project except as menials. Between the racism of New York's legendary construction czar, the Jewish Robert Moses,[1294] and the exclusion policies established by Samuel Gompers' unions, the building of modern-day New York was practically a "whites only" operation.

White ethnic immigrants stepped off the boat, marched right past Black American workers and into the unions, and developed the skill and experience necessary to start the construction firms that dominate the building trades today. And almost every American municipality that launched major public works projects followed Robert Moses' racist New York model. By 1939, the Black-labor forecasts were grim:

> As to jobs, the American Negro is in some respects worse off today than he was immediately after the Civil War....The building trades unions, North and South, tend to exclude Negroes.[1295]

Just 0.1 percent of America's 12 million Blacks were earning $5,000 or more a year.[1296] By 1942, a full generation after Gompers' death, racial exclusion by the unions had developed into a true art form. In that year the *Negro Handbook* reported the "outright exclusion of Negroes…chiefly [by the] American Federation of Labor craft unions."[1297] Even Philip Taft, the AFL historian, admitted that "discrimination against Negroes and other minority groups was tolerated in practice throughout the years."[1298]

By 1964, the *New York Times*'s headline trumpeted Gompers' planned result: U.S. FINDS NEGROES TRAPPED IN MENIAL JOBS.[1299] And studies showed Black male income relative to that of white men had actually declined in the 1950s. The income gap between Jews and Blacks placed them in the upper and lower classes respectively. Jews were making about $6,000 annually (almost $2,000 more than all Americans), while the median income of Blacks was $2,254.[1300] A generation later Black income in the South had stalled at *three-fifths* that of

whites.[1301]

Jewish scholars who have studied the "startling" success of Jewish immigrants attribute their rapid rise directly to the advantages they received through their union membership. Dinnerstein and Reimers state that the majority of Jewish immigrants worked in the garment industry, but, significantly,

> [t]he children of these *union members* more often than not acquired college educations and sought higher-status occupations.[1302]

The very people who had built the nation—having laid the roads, cleared the farmland, constructed the homes, the bridges, the waterways, the dams, having grown and harvested the cotton, wheat, rice, corn, and sugar—were by the twentieth century almost entirely un- or under-employed. Jews, for the most part, were unaffected by these union policies. Suzanne Model makes this point:

> Observe that industrial segregation handicaps Blacks most and Jews least. A likely explanation for this pattern is that Afro-Americans suffer the strongest discrimination and Jews the weakest….The large proportion of Jewish employers in the city and the operation of in-group preference meant that few Jews worked for members of other groups….Blacks were more likely to compete for jobs in the broader economy, stimulating greater discrimination in the process.[1303]

Some of Gompers' apologists maintain that he

was a product of his time and that his acquiescence to racial intransigence was his weakness, not his crime.[1304] But Gompers was a true and committed racial ideologue, hardly a reluctant manager of the policies of others. His leadership and active enforcement of racism in the Labor Movement prove he was a fervent true believer, who worked tirelessly and successfully to achieve his goal of American white supremacy.[1305]

1285 See Lorwin, *The American Federation of Labor*, 304.

1286 Marcie Cohen Ferris, "Dining in the Dixie Diaspora: A Meeting of Region and Religion," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History,* eds. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 232-33. According to Ferris, Black domestic workers freed Jewish women and children for school, community work, and better employment opportunities. Marcie Cohen Ferris, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2005), 120-21. See also Rupert B. Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture: A Study in the Social Geography of the American South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1929), 202-4; Hayward Derrick Horton et al., "Lost in the Storm: The Sociology of the Black Working Class, 1850 to 1990," *American Sociological Review* 65, no. 1 (Feb. 2000): 133-34; Gerald D. Jaynes, "Blacks in the Economy from Reconstruction to World War I," in *Upon These Shores: Themes in the African-American Experience, 1600 to the Present*, eds. William R. Scott and William G. Shade (New York: Routledge, 2000), 178-79.

1287 Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 33; Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1998), 87. Also, Phyllis Palmer, *Domesticity and Dirt: Housewives and Domestic Servants in the United States, 1920–1945* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1989), 12-14, 67-68; and Arnesen, "Following the Color Line of Labor," 77.

1288 Ginzberg and Eichner, *The Troublesome Presence*, 245-46.

1289 Harris, *The Harder We Run*, 39-40. Also Worthman, "Black Workers and Labor Unions," 59-60.

1290 Gatewood, "The Black Artisan in the U.S.," 31; Northrup, "Race Discrimination in Trade Unions," 131.

1291 Mary Fredrickson, "Four Decades of Change: Black Workers in Southern Textiles, 1941-1981," *Radical America* 16, no. 6 (Nov.-Dec. 1982): 28.

1292 James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860–1935* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1988), 233-34.

1293 Jacquelyn Dowd Hall et al., *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina

Press, 1987), 252. An overview of the development of Southern industry is in Samuel W. Goode, "Turning to the South," *AC,* 6 June 1897, 3.

1294 Robert Moses, a Jew, was the *power broker* behind New York's extraordinary construction boom after World War I. His biographer Robert Caro presents many examples of Moses' pathological racism. See his *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York: Knopf, 1974), 6-9, 19-20, 242, 318-19, 492-93, 512-14, 532-33, 557, 736. Also see Martha Biondi, "Robert Moses, Race, and the Limits of an Activist State," in *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York,* eds. Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 116-21.

1295 League of American Writers, *"We Hold These Truths...,"* 51; J. Wellington Evans, "Thumbs Down on Unions!" *Crisis,* April 1935, 103, 114; "The Negro and Union Labor," *Crisis,* June 1935, 183; "Says 330,000 Negroes Are Jobless in Nation," *NYT,* 16 March 1930, 28.

1296 Walter White, *How Far the Promised Land?* (New York: Viking Press, 1955; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1973), 117ff. According to White, the average annual income of Black workers was still, as of 1955, only about half that of whites.

1297 "Membership Policies of International Unions As They Affect Negro Workers," in *The Negro Handbook* (1942), 134, and 142-48 (statistics). By April of 1935, the NAACP's *Crisis* magazine (p. 103) asserted that the AFL was "this age's nearest approach to medieval monarchy."

1298 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 161. Also, an interesting discussion of the history of the "divide-and-conquer" ethnic-profiling tactic in the labor market is in Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2000)*,* 69-72.

1299 *NYT,* 16 Nov. 1964, 21; Orley Ashenfelter, "Racial Discrimination and Trade Unionism," *Journal of Political Economy* 80, no. 3 (May–June 1972): 462.

1300 Alan B. Batchelder, "Decline in the Relative Income of Negro Men," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 78, no. 4 (Nov. 1964): 529; Sidney Goldstein, "American Jewry: A Demographic Analysis," in *The Future of the Jewish Community in America*, ed. David Sidorsky (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), 121.

1301 Theodore J. Davis, Jr., "Income Inequities Between Black and White Populations in Southern Nonmetropolitan Counties," *Review of Black Political Economy* 22, no. 4 (spring 1994): 154.

1302 Emphasis ours. Leonard Dinnerstein and David M. Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), 156.

1303 Suzanne Model, "The Effects of Ethnicity in the Workplace on Blacks, Italians, and Jews in 1910 New York," *Journal of Urban History* 16, no. 1 (Nov. 1989): 46-47. Also, Eli Ginzberg, "Jews in the American Economy: The Dynamics of Opportunity," in *Jewish Life in America: Historical Perspectives,* ed. Gladys Levine Rosen (New York:

KTAV, 1978), 113; Norval D. Glenn, "Occupational Benefits to Whites From the Subordination of Negroes," *American Sociological Review* 28, no. 3 (June 1963): 443-44.

1304 Grob, "Organized Labor and the Negro Worker," 176, 174; Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 53-54.

1305 Karson and Radosh, "The American Federation of Labor and the Negro Worker," 158.

The Jewishness of Samuel Gompers

Yet from what we know of the Nazi propagandists of Aryan supremacy—of the Goebbelses and Hitlers—of their physiological and ethnic disabilities, perhaps Gompers' antecedents and physical appearance did equip him for racism.

—

Arthur Mann, 1953

Despite Gompers' lengthy and appalling racial rap sheet, some writers have tried to selectively retell his story. Historian Gerald N. Grob, for instance, went so far as to claim that Gompers "drew no distinction between Negro and white workers, for in his eyes both were members of the same economic class."[1306]

Herbert R. Northrup uncritically reiterated Gompers' own long-held position that "Negroes have been accorded treatment by the unions which has not been exceeded in fairness elsewhere." Jewish historian Moses Rischin curiously left out the term "race" when he wrote that Gompers' "gift for rising above the divisions of language, religion,

and nationality [was] essential to his role as leader and arbiter."[1307]

Anticipating only negativity by association, Jewish historians have tried to jettison Gompers and his racial legacy from Jewish group membership. One wrote, "Gompers early turned his back on the Lower East Side and his Jewish heritage."[1308] Another called him a "complex assimilating Jew,"[1309] and yet another described his behavior among Jews as "Uncle Tomish." One even neatly nudged Gompers out of the Jewish religion altogether. "In short," Bernard Mandel wrote, "he was a confirmed agnostic."[1310]

Despite these in-house censures, Gompers in actuality sported a uniquely Jewish résumé. His only formal education took place at the Jews' Free School—a Rothschild-funded Talmudic school in London—where he ranked third in his class.[1311] The following is his own proud assessment of his Jewish learning experience:

> I was taught Hebrew—not the mongrel language spoken and written by many Jews of the present age—but that honorable language that unlocked a literature of wonderful beauty and wisdom. The discipline gained from studying the Talmud is essentially the same as resulting from any legal study. It develops the more subtle qualities of mind; the student learns to deal with abstract problems, to make careful discriminations, to follow a line of reasoning from premise to conclusion. This legal training given to Jewish boys is fundamental in explaining the intellectual quality of many of the Jewish

people.[1312]

Before becoming the AFL's first president in 1886, Gompers was elected president of a cigar-rollers union, whose membership—like the profession itself—was exclusively Jewish. He appeared before Jewish groups wearing the traditional Jewish skullcap or yarmulke.[1313] He spent much of 1894–95 trying to organize Jewish garment workers, and he "played an important role as a mediator for Jewish labor at this time."[1314] He was a guest of honor at the United Hebrew Trades' banquet and spoke of Jewry's bonds: "...all of the old racial characteristics, the deep awareness of reality and the spirit of mystical understanding that have given the world its greatest religions, are still dominant in the Hebrew race," he preached.[1315] In stark contrast to his efforts to thwart Black advancement, Gompers said: "I am heartily in sympathy with any movement for equality and justice for the Jews and will do my utmost to further such an effort."[1316] He embraced Zionism and brought it to a higher American profile among other Jewish organizations.[1317] President Woodrow Wilson designated January 27, 1916, as Jewish Relief Day, in honor of Gompers' birth date.[1318]

Some of the most honored keepers of the Jewish legacy, such as Rabbi Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, are very explicit about Gompers' Jewish roots and his impact on early unionism: "Gompers was of Dutch Jewish background, stemming from a very distinguished family.…[He] probably did more than any other person to further the cause of organized labor in this country..." The rabbi considered him, "above all," to be "a man of integrity." A *Jewish Digest* article further asserted that the model for the early *Jewish* unions was Gompers' conception.[1319]

He was featured in *Jewish Heroes and Heroines of America* and therein called "a pioneer in making the American labor movement free and strong."[1320] The Jewish historian Harry Simonhoff saw the Gompers legacy in purely Jewish—even Biblical—terms:

> Submerged memories of his Jewish ancestors…were perhaps the motive powers behind his lifelong dedication to the workers. His single-tracked devotion to labor recalls the ancient prophet who subordinated his ease and safety so that Israel might live.[1321]

Perhaps a no more definitive statement has been made on the importance of Gompers in American *Jewish* history than that of Jewish journalist Paul Berman, who wrote in 2007:

> The most accomplished and admirable Jew in American history, to judge by his contributions to democracy and social justice, was surely Samuel Gompers…[1322]

The troubling part of the Gompers legacy within the context of the Black–Jewish relationship is the utter absence of any organized Jewish effort to condemn his Hitlerian hatred of Black Americans. Quite the contrary, though he towered above all others in his racial malevolence, Gompers did not act alone. Other prominent Jews willingly allied with Gompers and his AFL with full knowledge of his racial ideology. Jewish labor leaders and socialists, such as Morris Hillquit, Meyer London, Eugene Debs, Victor Berger and the largely Jewish organizations they represented, all found common cause with Gompers' racial agenda.[1323]

The largely Jewish International Ladies Garment

Workers Union (ILGWU) was committed to the political and economic programs favored by Gompers and backed him when his leadership was challenged. At the union's conventions, Jewish leaders Benjamin Schlesinger and Morris Sigman resisted the attempts to adopt resolutions criticizing the AFL. They "went out of their way to praise Samuel Gompers for the aid he and the AFL gave to the women's garment workers." At the 1920, 1922, and 1924 conventions Schlesinger and Sigman characterized Gompers as "our friend and constant supporter."[1324]

1306 Grob, "Organized Labor and the Negro Worker," 169, 173-74.

1307 Northrup, *Organized Labor and the Negro*, 120; Rischin, "The Jewish Labor Movement in America," 232.

1308 Burton Berinsky, review of *Samuel Gompers: American Statesman*, by Florence Calvert Thorne, *AJA* 11 (April 1959): 102.

1309 See Gerd Korman, "Labor Historians and Immigrants: A Review Essay," *AJH* 78, no. 2 (Sept. 1988): 296-97.

1310 Bernard Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and Religion," *Chicago Jewish Forum* 13, no. 1 (fall 1954): 12. Mandel asserts (p. 14) without proof: "Having abandoned the religion of his fathers…Gompers did not consider himself a Jew at all."

1311 Stuart Bruce Kaufman, ed., *The Samuel Gompers Papers,* vol. 1, *The Making of a Union Leader, 1850-1886* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1986), 3-4, 12 n. 1; Simonhoff, *Saga of American Jewry,* 153.

1312 Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor,* 1:6-7; Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 204; Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 3 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956), 286-87.

1313 Berinsky, review of *Samuel Gompers,* 102-3.

1314 Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880-1920*, vol. 3 of *The Jewish People in America*, ed. Henry L. Feingold (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992), 124, 127.

1315 Korman, "Labor Historians and Immigrants," 297. Gompers praised the establishment of a Jewish union, while he simultaneously saw the unionization of any "nonwhites" as a mortal threat. Ironically, he spoke of how "the blind unreasoning prejudice against the race [Jews] has been of such a character and such a degree that its effects are part of the very fibre of the people…" See Moses Rischin, *The Promised City* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 256.

1316 Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and Religion," 15.

1317 Polishook, "The American Federation of Labor," 228-44; Irwin Yellowitz, "Morris Hillquit: American Socialism and Jewish Concerns," *AJH* 68, no. 2 (Dec. 1978): 168.

1318 Polishook, "The American Federation of Labor," 235-36.

1319 Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews*, 3:282; Gus Tyler, "The Legacy of the Jewish Labor Movement," *Jewish Digest,* Aug. 1970, 76.

1320 Seymour Brody, "Samuel Gompers (1850-1924)," Jewish Virtual Library, 2006, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/gompers.html; Seymour Brody, "Samuel Gompers: Father of American Federation of Labor," in *Jewish Heroes and Heroines of America: 150 True Stories of American Jewish Heroism* (New York: Lifetime Books, 1996). Also, Cyrus Adler and I. George Dobsevage, "Samuel Gompers," *JEncy*, 2002, http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com.

1321 Simonhoff, *Saga of American Jewry*, 156-57.

1322 Quoted in *A Living Lens: Photographs of Jewish Life from the Pages of the Forward,* ed. Alana Newhouse (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 59. See Berman's *Blacks and Jews: Alliances and Arguments* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1994).

1323 Howard M. Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America* (New York: Knopf, 1992), 180-81; Robert Asher, "Jewish Unions and the American Federation of Labor Power Structure, 1903-1935," *AJHQ* 65 (March 1976): 216. The Jewish unions in the Gompers-led AFL included the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the International Fur Workers' Union of the United States and Canada, and the United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers. Debs did appear to sympathize with the plight of Blacks in America, but his egalitarian rhetoric found no place in his union the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) or in Socialist policy. See Ronald Radosh, ed., *Debs* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 60-63; and Eugene V. Debs, *Gentle Rebel: Letters of Eugene V. Debs,* ed. J. Robert Constantine (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1995), 107-8. Roger Daniels wrote that "Debs always avoided racism, but did not combat it in his comrades." See his *Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1966), 127 n. 43.

1324 Asher, "Jewish Unions and the American Federation of Labor," 222-23, 225-26.

The Jews in the Chinese Exclusion Movement

Samuel Gompers believed in absolute white supremacy and did not discriminate in his discrimination: Blacks, of course, were subhuman; and Mexican immigration and Mexican immigrants he decried as a "torrent of peon poison" and as "slim-legged peons with tortillas in their stomachs."[1325] But he saved some of his most shocking invective for those who comprised a third of the world's population—the people of the continent of Asia. Gompers called them "coolies," "mongolians," "asiatics," or "yellow peril," and he targeted them even before waging his corrosive campaign against the Black man. Gompers teamed with other labor officials, many of them Jewish, to fight for government policies that sought the total removal of the Asian from American soil.[1326]

At the root of Gompers' ire was the fact that the industrious and experienced Asian workers represented a formidable challenge to white economic hegemony in America. Their phenomenal success in taking advantage of the American system of capitalism had threatened to displace the white man in many areas of industry, trade, and commerce, particularly on the West Coast. Instead of encouraging the innovations and superior techniques of the Asian Americans and emulating their methods, the majority of whites simply wanted them physically removed.

Prior to the Civil War, Chinese immigrants arrived in the United States seeking the same economic opportunity all other voluntary immigrants desired. They nonetheless faced discrimination on the West Coast, where the vast majority settled; and very much like the Black and Indian experience, every aspect of their lives was

severely restricted. They were excluded from the professions and trades; they were assigned to segregated schools; they were refused service in public places; and, like Blacks, they could not testify in court for or against a white person. They were subject to special heavy taxes, unable to vote, and prohibited from buying land or residing in white neighborhoods and from bringing their families into the United States.[1327]

Even so, more Asians began to arrive in America in increasing numbers after the Civil War and they immediately made their presence known as skilled farmers and tradesmen. By 1870, the Chinese formed about ten percent of California's population —enough to arouse the racist impulses of Pacific coast whites, who began to organize in earnest to confront what they termed the "yellow peril." Labor unions, representing the "threatened" class of whites, led the way, effectively using the growing anti-Asian sentiment to organize.[1328]

Samuel Gompers' own cigarmaking trade saw an influx of highly skilled, lower-wage-earning Asian workers who threatened Jewish dominance in that field. Gompers' response was pure, naked racism. In the same year that the Russians enacted severe laws restricting the movements and conduct of Jews, Gompers successfully lobbied the United States Congress to pass the Exclusion Act of 1882, which suspended the immigration of Chinese workers for ten years. It was the first federal law to discriminate against any immigrant group, setting a disturbing legal precedent in the "land of the free."[1329] The irony of Gompers' racist campaign is that in 1880 the Anti-Semitic League, the first German "hate group" committed specifically to combating Jewish influence, advocated the very same repression of Jews in Germany.[1330]

1325 Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 85.

1326 Samuel Gompers and Herman Gutstadt, *Meat vs. Rice: American Manhood Against Asiatic Coolieism, Which Shall Survive?* (pamphlet published by American Federation of Labor [and printed as Senate Document 137], 1902; reprint, San Francisco: Asiatic Exclusion League, 1908), 11, 14, 20, 21, passim.

1327 Rodman W. Paul, "The Origin of the Chinese Issue in California," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 25, no. 2 (Sept. 1938): 181-96; William Petersen, "The Study of Man: The 'Scientific' Basis of Our Immigration Policy," *Commentary* 20 (July 1955): 78; Martin Hall, "California's Japanese Americans," *Chicago Jewish Forum* 16, no. 1 (fall 1957): 18; Robert Higgs, "Landless by Law: Japanese Immigrants in California Agriculture to 1941," *Journal of Economic History* 38, no. 1 (March 1978): 205-25. A brief review is in Ronald Takaki, *Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1989), 14-15. Also, the Naturalization Law of 1790 specified that full citizenship was to be reserved for whites only. Voting rights were broadened to include unpropertied white men, essentially shifting the qualification required for voting from land ownership to whiteness.

1328 Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1966), 16-17, 18.

1329 This law would be revisited and renewed for an additional 20 years. Roger Daniels, *Prisoners Without Trial: Japanese Americans in World War II* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993), 7; Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 208; Jules Becker, *The Course of Exclusion, 1882-1924: San Francisco Newspaper Coverage of the Chinese and Japanese in the United States* (San Francisco: Mellen Research Univ. Press, 1991), 2.

1330 Moshe Zimmermann, *Wilhelm Marr: The Patriarch of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), 91-95, 146-47. Wilhelm Marr headed the group and in 1879 coined the term "anti-Semitism" in his writings.

The Jewish Onslaught Against "John Chinaman"

Samuel Gompers was drafted into the anti-Asian campaign by west coast labor organizer and fellow Jew Charles Bergman, who, according to Gompers, laid out the Chinese threat "with such clarity and force" that

> I fully aligned myself with the California movement for exclusion and at every opportunity aided in safeguarding the people of America from the dangers which confronted us.[1331]

Other Jewish labor leaders joined him, including United Hebrew Trades founder Morris Hillquit and future congressman Victor Berger, both described as "virulent opponents of Asian immigration." Berger insisted that the United States and Canada must remain "white men's countries" and feared that America would become a "black-and-yellow country."[1332] Hillquit wanted to restrict immigration of all those he called "backward races."[1333]

Asian exclusion remained an important issue for the AFL throughout the Gompers years, as well as an effective organizing tool among its intensely xenophobic constituency. In 1901, it officially resolved to "concentrate all the resources of the organization upon a supreme effort."[1334] What's more, Gompers and his followers, labeling all Asians as "yellow peril," reprised their mission when the Japanese began to master some trades and industries they believed belonged to whites.

Paul Scharrenberg became the AFL's chief leader and spokesman on the exclusion issue. "We are anxious to have enacted an exclusion law which

will effectively and permanently bar these little brown men from our shores," he declared in 1915.[1335] Jewish labor leaders were not the only American Sinophobes—the Irish were also well represented. But one Jewish labor historian maintains that Adolph Strasser and Samuel Gompers—both Jewish immigrants—"above all others, were responsible for organized labor's crusade against Asian workers."[1336]

1331 Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, 2:161.

1332 Victor Berger wrote in 1902 that Blacks "were socially and politically backward when compared with whites and Orientals." See Harris, *The Harder We Run*, 198 n. 38, which cites Berger, "The Misfortune of the Negro," *Social Democratic Herald*, 31 May 1902. See also Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since 1882* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2004), 17; Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 46; Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 43-44; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 30, 86.

1333 Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 30. Hillquit was a Latvian Jew. See Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006), 82.

1334 Delber L. McKee, "'The Chinese Must Go!' Commissioner General Powderly and Chinese Immigration, 1897-1902," *Pennsylvania History* 44 (Jan. 1977): 41; Delber L. McKee, *Chinese Exclusion Versus the Open Door Policy, 1900-1906* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1977), 53-54. Roger Daniels writes (*The Politics of Prejudice*, 17) that the anti-Asian campaign contributed more than any other one factor to the strength of the labor movement. When the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was passed, the California labor movement temporarily collapsed.

1335 Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 59-60, 79, 87; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues,* 84-85:

> In 1917, [President Woodrow] Wilson signed a new immigration law creating a "Barred Zone" east of the Caucasus Mountains, the Ural River, and the Ural Mountains. The new law effectively united Japanese, Korean, and East Indian immigrants with the excluded Chinese as racial pariahs whose continued immigration was not to be countenanced.

1336 Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 37-38n, 40.

Anti-Chinese Violence

Arthur Mann wrote that Gompers demonstrated "pioneering efforts in racial slander,"[1337] inciting whites to violence in the gory tradition of the Ku Klux Klan. The "Chinese Must Go!" campaigns frequently resulted in race riots and murderous attacks on Asians. One expert on this subject, Roger Daniels, wrote that "[n]o one will ever know how many Chinese were murdered in California," and in one 1871 incident, a mob of over 500 Los Angeles whites massacred the Chinese, destroying their homes and businesses and killing nineteen or more on the street ironically called Calle de los Negros, known colloquially as Nigger Alley. At the time, only 200 Chinese were living in Los Angeles, the total population of which was less than six thousand. The scene was reminiscent of so many gruesome Southern scenarios:

> The dead Chinese in Los Angeles were hanging at three places near the heart of the downtown business section of the city….One of the victims hung without his trousers and minus a finger on his left hand. The trousers had been hastily pulled off…because it was suspected that he had some money in them…and the finger had been severed from his hand because it had a diamond ring on it which would not readily slip off.[1338]

One historian identified 55 anti-Chinese riots in the West during the latter decades of the nineteenth century, including thirty-four in California, nine in Washington, and four in Nevada. In the town of Chico, Washington, Chinese were murdered, their homes were burned, and all Chinese were expelled.

In Rock Springs, Wyoming, in 1885, twenty-eight Chinese miners were killed, fifteen injured, and hundreds were driven out of town. In 1885, 320 Chinese Americans were expelled from Eureka, California, and the next year whites drove Chinese from Arcata, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rohnerville, and Trinidad. In a chilling foreshadowing of the most vicious of Nazi actions, many of the Chinese in Humboldt Bay were stripped of their property, loaded onto boxcars, and driven out of town.[1339]

1337 Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 203.

1338 Paul M. De Falla, "Lantern in the Western Sky," *Historical Society of Southern California Annual Publication* (March 1960): 22; C. P. Dorland, "Chinese Massacre at Los Angeles in 1871," *Publications of the Historical Society of Southern California* 3, no. 2 (1894): 22-26; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 17; Reva Clar and William M. Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations in the Far West: 1850-1950," part 2, *Western States Jewish History* 21, no. 2 (Jan. 1989): 137; Becker, *The Course of Exclusion*, 12; Willard A. Heaps, *Riots, U.S.A., 1765-1970* (New York: Seabury Press, 1970), 61-71.

1339 Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 80; Jean Pfaelzer, *Driven Out: The Forgotten War against Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 2007), 256-90; caption accompanying photograph (facing p. 276) of Chinese being loaded onto boxcar, in Loewen, *Sundown Towns*.

Gompers' Anti-Chinese Cigar Campaign

There is no better example of the extreme anti-Asian xenophobia encouraged by Gompers' union movement than that revealed by the activities of the San Francisco-based Cigar Makers' International Union. The tactics employed by this exclusively Jewish union in its campaign to remove all Asians from its trade demonstrate a calculated, sophisticated Jewish racism.

By the mid-1860s Chinese cigar rollers composed a majority of those employed in that profession in California. In San Francisco alone they had become seven-eighths of the tradesmen. White cigarmakers, who were mostly Eastern European immigrant Jews,[1340] were unwilling to accept that the Chinese were more skilled and efficient at their craft and that their superior product had overtaken the market. The Jews organized under the leadership of Adolph Strasser and Samuel Gompers as the Cigar Makers' International Union (CMIU)—not to improve their own skills and efficiency, but to "drive Orientals out of the trade," wrote Herbert Hill.[1341]

Their tactics were simple: pressure one large manufacturer to hire just a few white workers and then through threats of strikes, boycotts, and violence pressure the management from within to remove the Chinese. At the same time, they would conduct strikes and boycotts against other firms that employed the Chinese. The Jewish firm of Koeniger, Falk and Mayer capitulated to union pressure and set up what amounted to an affirmative action program for the less-qualified whites. Soon, nearly half of the 160-man work force was Caucasian.[1342]

Led by Strasser, the Jewish union introduced a

white label that they affixed to the cigar boxes that said in part, "THE CIGARS HEREIN CONTAINED ARE MADE BY WHITE MEN." Soon thereafter, California passed a law requiring every cigar factory to apply a "WHITE LABOR" union stamp to each cigar box, to distinguish its product from those cigars made by the Chinese.[1343] In 1875, the St. Louis cigarmakers followed suit and introduced a bright red label, and later the CMIU decided on a blue one. Thus, Hill explains, "the great tradition of the *union label* began as a racist stratagem."[1344]

A sympathetic white public bonded with the unionists and boycotted all California cigar manufacturers *except* the Jewish firm Koeniger, Falk and Mayer. An advertisement in a Los Angeles paper in 1881 carried an ad for the Key West Cigar Stand, owned by the Jewish Sim Isaacs. The ad emphasized, "No Chinamen Employed."[1345]

By 1885, all major cigar producers had surrendered to CMIU's demands. The emboldened San Francisco local union president Jake Wolf, also Jewish, demanded that they further promise that all the Chinese would be removed from the industry the moment white workers could be found to replace them. According to Hill, "A process of racial occupational eviction had begun that would soon be used by organized labor against black workers in many occupations."[1346]

1340 That cigarmaking was a Jewish specialty is discussed in *Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina,* by Leonard Rogoff (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2001), 40, and in Arcadius Kahan, "Economic Choices and Opportunities: The Jewish Immigrants, 1880-1914," *Journal of Economic History* 1 (March 1978): 245. Northrup, *Organized Labor and the Negro*, 103: "Cigarettes were first introduced into this country in 1867, and were soon being hand-rolled in southern factories, first by Jewish immigrants imported for that purpose, and later by Negroes taught by them." Also, ISJL, "Durham, North Carolina."

1341 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 50. Daniels, *The Politics of*

Prejudice, 21: San Francisco, California, became the "mecca of the movement." Rudolf Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," *Jewish Social Studies* 16, no. 3 (July 1954): 221; Reva Clar and William M. Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations in the Far West: 1850-1950," part 1, *Western States Jewish History* 21, no. 1 (Oct. 1988): 21; Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy,* 214.

1342 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 50; also Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy,* 216, 217, 218.

1343 Kaufman, *The Samuel Gompers Papers*, 1:126 n. 7, 115 n. 17, 124-25; Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 48, 50. Kaufman, *The Samuel Gompers Papers,* 1:126 n. 7: "In the spring of 1878 the California State Senate considered but did not pass a bill requiring manufacturers to stamp all cigar boxes with the name of the race of the workers who made the contents." Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 39-40.

1344 Emphasis ours. Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 50; Dennis East, "Union Labels and Boycotts: Cooperation of the Knights of Labor and the Cigar Makers International Union, 1885-86," *Labor History* 16, no. 2 (spring 1975): 266-71.

1345 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations in the Far West," part 2:138; Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 50.

1346 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 50-51. The Cigar Makers' 1865 Constitution stipulated that "unless said person is a white practical cigar maker," he could not belong to any local union. See Bloch, *Circle of Discrimination*, 85-86. See also Grob, "Organized Labor and the Negro Worker," 165-66; Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy*, 216; Hill, "Race, Ethnicity, and Organized Labor," 38.

Samuel Gompers & Adolf Hitler: Ideological Allies

Samuel Gompers and other AFL leaders became, according to Herbert Hill, "the most articulate champions of the anti-Oriental cause in America."[1347] Gompers' pragmatic position was that the Asian workers threatened the jobs of native American workers, but "more important," wrote MIT professor Arthur Mann, "he loathed them as a race."[1348] Gompers even supported anti-Asian policies entirely outside the realm of labor, such as when he publicly defended the segregation of Japanese public school students in San Francisco.[1349]

In 1902, Gompers co-authored a pamphlet with the AFL's San Francisco representative, fellow Jew Herman Gutstadt,[1350] titled *Some Reasons for Chinese Exclusion: Meat vs. Rice, American Manhood Against Asiatic Coolieism—Which Shall Survive?* So treacherous was this screed, so blatant its appeal to deep racial hatreds, so transparent in its intent to incite racist violence, that it would easily surpass in its cruelty the worst propaganda of Hitler's Nazi party.[1351] Its purpose was to persuade Congress to renew the Chinese Exclusion Law, which was due to expire the following year, and to extend its discrimination to all Asians—for all time.[1352]

But that publication was merely a reflection of Gompers' ongoing public campaign against the Asian. At the AFL's 1904 convention, he distinguished between deities: "The American God was not the God of the Japanese." As a matter of policy, the AFL declared that the "Japanese were as difficult to assimilate into the American culture as were the Chinese."[1353] In the May 1905 issue of the *American Federationist*, Gompers referred to a

visiting Japanese dignitary as a “presumptuous Jap” with a “leprous mouth whose utterances show this mongrel’s perverseness, ignorance, and maliciousness....”[1354]

“The barrier between ‘Caucasians’ and ‘Asiatics’ was insurmountable,” said Gompers, and “either we exclude them by law or they ‘will be driven out by force of arms.’” Gompers asserted that the racial differences between whites and Asians (whom he called “Asiatics”) would never be overcome, and went on to catalog their alleged depravities. “Ninety-nine out of every 100 Chinese are gamblers,” he wrote.

> The Yellow Man finds it natural to lie, cheat, and murder....Opium, the pride of “John Chinaman” and the flower of the “civilization of Confucius,” was corrupting Caucasians in every Chinatown from San Francisco to Boston.[1355]

When the Sugar Beet and Farm Laborers’ Union applied to the American Federation of Labor for a charter, Gompers replied, “Your union must guarantee that it will under no circumstances accept membership of any Chinese or Japanese.”[1356] The Chinese, he said, “love to prey upon American girls,” and prefer them to their own women. Gompers then raised an old Southern canard:

> Time was when little girls no older than twelve years were found in Chinese laundries under the influence of opium. What other crimes were committed in those dark and fetid places when these little victims of the Chinaman’s wiles were under the influence of the drug is

too horrible to imagine.[1357]

Hitler was but a boy when Gompers scrawled this racist libel in 1902, but he could easily have found in the labor leader's public pronouncements the seeds of his own racist ideology. In 1925, Hitler made the identical case against Gompers' own people, the Jews, in his *Mein Kampf*. Here is Adolf Hitler's reworking of the Gompers ideology:

> With satanic joy in his face, the black-haired Jewish youth lurks in wait for the unsuspecting girl whom he defiles with his blood, thus stealing her from her people….Just as he himself systematically ruins women and girls, he does not shrink back from pulling down the blood barriers for others, even on a large scale.[1358]

According to Gompers, who continued in this vein, Chinese prostitutes were all diseased, more so than the white ones.[1359] Similarly, in *Mein Kampf,* Adolf Hitler attacked prostitution as a major cause of Germany's decline. Many of Germany's troubles, he thought, could be blamed on "this *Jewification* of our spiritual life and mammonization [commercialization] of our mating instinct," which threatened to annihilate future generations of healthy Germans.[1360] Gompers, again, proved to be ahead of his time. "Those who befriended the Chinese," he stated in 1901, were scheming "to *Chineseize* the American people." The 1901 AFL convention denounced the Chinese as "people of vice and sexual immorality who were incompatible with our moral concepts."[1361]

Hitler would later deploy his cinematographers to animalize the Jews,[1362] one production even

likening them to packs of rats, but the Jewish Gompers was able to create a similar impression of the Asians using only his rhetoric:

> These Asiatics also loved to live in filthy surroundings, throve on damp cellars, vermin, moldy food, open cesspools, stinking sinks and urinals. It all came so naturally to them, being Yellow Men.[1363]

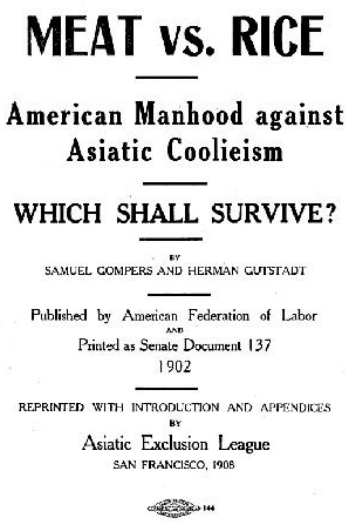
Although the Chinese servant worked faithfully in an "American household," explained Gompers,

> He joyfully hastens back to his slum and *his burrow* to the grateful luxury of his normal surroundings—vice, filth, and an atmosphere of horror….Here every woman is unclean, she has no children, she is a slave, sold at birth to infamy and trained to vice as white men train their children to virtue. The men cook their own food, tend their own foul sleeping places and live on twenty dollars a year.[1364]

Whereas *Mein Kampf* was the prison scribble of a disgraced German army corporal long before his rise to infamy, Gompers' words were uttered when he was the chief spokesman for the workingman, a devout Jew at the helm of the American Labor Movement—in the very seat of power in America.

In addition, Gompers' anti-Asian Nazism was not anathema in Jewish circles. Jewish writer, economist, and historian of American labor Selig Perlman gave a striking endorsement of his coreligionist:

> The anti-Chinese agitation in California… was doubtless *the most important single factor in the history of American labor*, for without it the entire country might have been overrun by Mongolian labor…[1365]



MEAT vs. RICE

American Manhood against Asiatic Coolieism

WHICH SHALL SURVIVE?

BY
SAMUEL GOMPERS AND HERMAN GUTSTADT

Published by American Federation of Labor
AND
Printed as Senate Document 137
1902

REPRINTED WITH INTRODUCTION AND APPENDICES
BY
Asiatic Exclusion League
SAN FRANCISCO, 1908

Under Gompers, the Asian Exclusion Movement was a planned and efficient undertaking with clear white supremacist goals and political objectives, and it proved to be the absolute precursor of the AFL assault on Black labor. It remains today one of the most disgraceful chapters in American Jewish history. Labor historian Herbert Hill:

> Their success in excluding what they called "Mongolians" from the labor force suggested to the leadership of the American Labor movement how they could deal with the black worker. In each instance the objective was the same: to drive the workers of the offending "non-Caucasian" race from the job market,

> either (as in the case of the Chinese and the Japanese) by keeping them out of the country or (as in the case of blacks, Mexican-Americans and other "tainted" groups) by limiting them to low-paying, unskilled, non-mobile jobs outside of the mainstream of the American labor force.[1366]

1347 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 51. According to Herbert Hill, "Samuel Gompers was the major spokesman for the anti-Oriental view of organized labor."

1348 Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 208; Berinsky, review of *Samuel Gompers,* 103; McKee, "'The Chinese Must Go!'" 40.

1349 Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 60.

1350 An alternative spelling for Gompers' co-author is Hermann Gudstadt.

1351 Samuel Gompers and Herman Gutstadt, *Meat vs. Rice: American Manhood Against Asiatic Coolieism, Which Shall Survive?* (pamphlet published by American Federation of Labor [and printed as Senate Document 137], 1902; reprint, San Francisco: Asiatic Exclusion League, 1908). In seeking an assistant to manage his anti-Asian campaign, Gompers first requested the services of two other men, one of them a Jew named "Rosenberg," before accepting Gutstadt. See Stuart Bruce Kaufman et al., eds., *The Samuel Gompers Papers,* vol. 5, *An Expanding Movement at the Turn of the Century, 1898-1902* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1996), 406-7; Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 206. Though published in 1902 to target the Chinese *Meat vs. Rice* was reissued in 1908, because the "Mongolian menace" had suddenly reemerged in the form of the Japanese. See Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 52. Also, Greenbaum, "The Social Ideas of Samuel Gompers," 43-44; Kaufman, *The Samuel Gompers Papers,* 5:458, 459 n. 4; and "Shonts Broke Pledge on Chinese—Gompers," *NYT,* 12 Aug. 1906, 4.

1352 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 52. The bill was introduced in the Senate on Jan. 16, 1902, and in the House two days later by a Jewish California representative, Julius Kahn, as H.R. 9330 (see his profile, this chapter). Also, Kaufman, *The Samuel Gompers Papers,* 5:459 n. 4.

1353 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 53-54. Hill adds: "At the turn of the century, the American Federation of Labor was committed to a policy of racial superiority..."

1354 Hill, "Labor Unions and the Negro," 480n.

1355 Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 208-9. See also Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 40; Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 52.

1356 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 53. Gompers refused to grant

the charter. See Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, 199-200.

1357 See also Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 52; Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 209.

1358 Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), 325. See also Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy*, 268.

1359 Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 209; Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1998), 26, 27.

1360 Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 247.

1361 Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 40. Samuel Gompers similarly expressed his fear that some industries would soon be "Chinaized." See Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues,* 76.

1362 *The Wandering Jew*, for instance, directed by Fritz Hippler in 1940.

1363 Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," 209.

1364 Emphasis ours. Hill, "Racial Practices of Organized Labor," 40. This may have been Gompers projecting onto the Asians what he knew of conditions in New York City's Jewish ghetto. According to Jean Ulitz Mensch, "Social Pathology in Urban America: Desertion, Prostitution, Gambling, Drugs and Crime among Eastern European Jews in New York City between 1881 and World War I" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia Univ., 1983), 15-16:

> The air shafts [in the tenements] filled with noxious fumes from rotting garbage and the increasingly narrow yards were the repositories of rubbish, garbage, the contents of chamber pots and cats, both dead and alive. The long dark hallways were described as barbarous.

In Philadelphia:

> In the Jewish sections…were [streets] especially notorious for their decaying wooden bandboxes, animal excrement in the cobblestone alleyways, and visible evidence of crime and prostitution. These Philadelphia streets were not very different from streets dominated by immigrant Jews in other cities in every region of the United States.

See Sorin, *A Time for Building*, 144. A March 6, 1893, *NYT* article titled "Streets Buried in Filth" (p. 9) reported that an area in the city "largely populated by Russian and Polish Jews, Bohemians, Slavs, &c., the most uncleanly population which the city has, [is] really in a terrible condition." It reported that the East Side, an "offense to the eye, and prospective stench to the nostrils, exists to an extent that warrants alarm." For further similar complaints, see "East Side Street Vendors," *NYT,* 30 July 1893, 17:

> A writer might go on for a week reciting the abominations of these people, and still have much to tell. One of their greatest faults is that they have an utter disregard for law. There is a certain hour when they are

> required to set out their garbage and ash cans, but they pay no attention to that. The ash cart comes along and takes what is in sight, and perhaps five minutes later some of these people will empty pail after pail of household ashes and garbage into the middle of the street. If they are arrested for this or any other offense hundreds of their compatriots and coreligionists follow them to the courts and stand ready to swear in their favor. Filthy persons and clothing reeking with vermin are seen on every side. Many of these people are afflicted with diseases of the skin. Children are covered with sores, and hundreds of them are nearly blind with sore eyes….This neighborhood, peopled almost entirely by the people who claim to have been driven from Poland and Russia, is the eyesore of New York, and perhaps the filthiest place on the Western Continent….If the cholera should ever get among these people they would scatter its germs as a sower does grain.

1365 Emphasis ours. Selig Perlman, *A History of Trade Unionism in the United States* (1922; reprint, New York: A.M. Kelley, 1950), 62. See also Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 45. Hill comments: "These words, let it be emphasized, are quoted not because they are true but because they reflect the view held by organized labor and many of its academic apologists, even at the present time." Perlman prefaces his statement with this remarkable sentence: "The political issue after 1877 was racial, not financial, and the weapon was not merely the ballot, but also 'direct action'—violence." An amazing statement because Hitler rose to power and was condemned the world over for using this precise method.

1366 Hill, "Anti-Oriental Agitation," 54. See Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, 2:165. Gompers "publicly defend[ed] the policy of San Francisco in segregating Japanese students in the public schools." See Mandel, "Samuel Gompers and the Negro Workers," 60. See also Gompers' statement about "Chinese laborers and coolies," in *NYT*, 12 Aug. 1906, 4; and Gyory, *Closing the Gate*, 27.

Anti-Asian Jews: Hate Unlimited

The Jews' relationship to the Chinese in the West was very much like their relationship to Blacks in the South. Chinese men worked as cooks, maids, butlers, launderers, nannies, gardeners, and servants in Jewish homes.[1367] They were preferred, said one Jewish informant, because

> they are more steady than the darkey and not so tricky. People from the East do not like Chinese help at first, but soon get accustomed to them and generally find them good, clean and faithful servants.[1368]

They also worked as low-wage laborers in Jewish-owned factories. In 1876, the following companies employed Asians:

Levinsky Brothers—60 Chinese

Buckingham & Hecht—40

O. Porter & Schlesinger—54

Rosenthal, Feder & Co.—16

S. Wolff & Co.—25

T. Alexander & Co.—35

Ash Bros.—20

E. B. Elfeld & Co.—45

L. Strauss & Co.—180

Max Morgenthau—1,000

Morgenthau, a Jewish clothing manufacturer in San Francisco, felt that "white workers were generally unreliable and tended to absenteeism; therefore, he was compelled to turn to the Chinese."[1369]

But Jewish employment of Asians should not suggest any sense of compassion for their plight.[1370] An 1889 report on the Los Angeles Jewish community "included evidence that Jewish bias in some quarters was substantial." "Many" Jewish merchants boycotted the Asians, "discharging their Chinese employees as rapidly as possible."[1371] Adolph Sutro was elected mayor of San Francisco in 1894, and he made a very public spectacle of his intolerance:

> I can say one thing, that among all the thousands that I have employed during my life in California, I have never employed a Chinaman….The very worst emigrants from Europe are a hundred times more desirable than these Asiatics.[1372]

"[T]here can be no doubt," one scholar pointed out, that along with all other ethnic whites, Jews "fell for the anti-Chinese psychosis to a considerable extent."[1373] And the bigotry emanated from the very top of Jewish leadership. Three of San Francisco's leading rabbis—Elkan Cohn, Henry Vidaver, and A. S. Bettelheim—joined other clergymen in asking President Rutherford B. Hayes to sign the bill restricting Chinese immigration.[1374] Rabbi Judah Wechsler wrote to *The American Israelite* from San Francisco:

> The Chinese element…[is] an injury to the further development of any city, for they have no interest but their own and never identify themselves with our institutions. Their future emigration is, however, now wisely prohibited.[1375]

A letter to the editor of a Chicago Jewish paper betrays a sense of glee over the misery inflicted upon the Asians:

> There is always something on hand to keep the city astir. The latest is the turbulent feelings of the workingmen for the expulsion of the Chinese. *It was really amusing to see them parade*, day after day, in regular file, many women in their ranks I am sorry to say….United States troops are now stationed here…to avert a threatened riot…[1376]

And still other more prominent Jewish figures were intimately involved in the hateful "Yellow Peril" frenzy.

Representative Julius Kahn

On the all-important federal level, the Asian Exclusion Movement received powerful assistance from the 12-term Republican congressman from San Francisco, Julius Kahn, a Jew.[1377] The German-born ex-stage actor, who was affiliated with the city's synagogue Temple Emanu El, led the legislative charge to run Asians out of the country, even as he and other American Jewish leaders pushed mightily to ease regulations restricting European Jewish immigration.[1378] Kahn was such a dominant advocate of banning Asians from America that the

legislation he authored and vigorously promoted was called the Kahn Exclusion Act.[1379]

Julius Kahn's eloquent arguments, from the floor of the House of Representatives in the 1902 debate on Chinese Exclusion, portray all Asians as subhuman and genetically disqualified from American citizenship. Every single anti-Jewish canard later applied to the Jews by Hitler's minions was employed by Congressman Kahn against the Chinese. Every single one.[1380]

Kahn told Congress that "the duplicity and the trickery of the Chinese themselves made it necessary" to close all loopholes that they may use to gain entry to the U.S. He asserted that the Chinese had "a supreme contempt for our judicial system" and "a duplicity that is almost unparalleled among the nations of the earth."[1381]

He assailed Chinese morals and alleged that "[i]t is they who import Chinese girls into this country for immoral purposes. It is they who hire… murderers to assassinate their business and personal enemies."[1382] He claimed the Chinese

> …are frequently besotted with opium[, which] is much worse than the liquor habit.…It is true that gambling and sensuality are the great vices of the Chinese, the latter taking unnatural forms with terrible frequency.…As I have already shown, murder is not an uncommon thing among them.[1383]

He claimed the Chinese were slaveholders, whose victims are kept in "the dens of Chinatown," where they "are beaten, dragged by the hair, burned with hot irons, and scalded with boiling water." They were liars, said Kahn: "[T]hese people

go into the courts and swear to almost anything." He even read a poem from the floor of Congress, eliciting "Laughter and applause" from his fellow congressmen:

> For ways that are dark / And for tricks that are vain/The heathen Chinese is peculiar, / Which the same I shall always maintain.[1384]

For the *Washington Post* Kahn summarized, in convenient categories of decrepitude,[1385] behavior he attributed to the Chinese:

> **GAMBLING HOUSES**: "There is scarcely a gambling house in the Chinese quarter that has not innumerable secret panels, sliding and trap doors, and all kinds of odd receptacles into which all tell-tale evidence can be secreted upon the first signal from the lookout."
>
> **OPIUM SMOKING**: "Opium smoking is the recreation of the entire race."[1386]
>
> **CHINESE v. WHITE**: "[The Chinese] will work from sunrise to sunset without complaint, and having no high ideals or high aspirations, they are like so many machines.…He is absolutely without nerves. He does not seem to be possessed of ambition or desire to better his condition in life. The idea of a home… never enters the Chinese laborer's mind….It would be impossible for white men to live as these people do."
>
> **CHINESE EVIL**: "[A]fter a trip through

> Chinatown I think no one will doubt the wisdom of making the barriers so strong and so high against Chinese laborers and the vicious and depraved of the race in general that the end will be in sight of Chinese quarters on this side of the Pacific."

The Anti-Asian Message of Congressman Julius Kahn

WILL NOT ALLOW ANY ALIENS TO OWN LAND

Representative Kahn Says That California Will Not Permit Another Election to Take Place

Julius Kahn (Courtesy)

"SATANIC" CHARACTERISTICS "REVOLTING"

Phrasing of Anti-Gag Speech by Representative Kahn Is Plain

Oregonian, February 14, 1920

Philadelphia Inquirer, January 14, 1913

"I DO NOT KNOW A "WHITE JAPANESE."
Julius L. Meier, on Japanese Exclusion

Congressman Kahn called the Chinese "satanic" and even referred to them collectively as "The Chinese devil." He made eugenic arguments against them, speaking of their blood types and the dangers of them mixing with white Americans. He complained that they were unassimilable: "The experience of many years has taught us that occidental and oriental civilizations will not mix."[1387]

Like Gompers, Kahn fully supported the segregation of Japanese children from white children in the schools of San Francisco, an issue that generated so much anger that it created a threat of war with Japan. A Jewish supporter of Kahn, G. Schoenfeld, reasoned in 1906 in precisely the same way the white citizens of Little Rock, Arkansas, would in 1956. He felt that Californians

> cannot let [the Japanese] mingle on terms of equality with the white children….When you see droves of them, and see what they look like and what

> they are, you will not want your children to go to school with them.[1388]

The Chinese, whose civilization predated Moses by at least 15,000 years, were nonetheless scored as savages:

> They know absolutely nothing of sanitation. They wear little clothing. Even in many of the most pretentious shops the salesmen are naked to the waist and do not even wear shoes, stockings, or slippers….They seemed to have no private dwellings…

And they smelled, said Kahn, to the delight of his congressional colleagues:

> The poet Coleridge in describing the city of Cologne said: "I counted two and seventy stenches,/All well defined, and several stinks." But Coleridge never traveled through the streets of Canton. Had he visited that city, or Shanghai either, he would have simply been compelled to stop the count. [Laughter.][1389]

Rep. Julius Kahn faced no rebuke from any of the Jewish leaders or rabbis of the time, some of whom embraced the congressman as an ally, a friend, and a coreligionist of the highest integrity.[1390] Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger voiced his support in the synagogue newspaper, saying, "We are proud of his record."[1391] Upon Kahn's death his congressional cronies declared that "he was foremost in fostering his country's welfare" and that

> the country has lost a true, just and wise man, one possessing the loftiest patriotism and self-sacrificing devotion to his conception of the right.[1392]

Despite his despicably racist public record, the Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum in Berkeley, California, deemed Kahn "[a] scrupulously honest politician."[1393] Kahn, along with Samuel Gompers, was classed as one of the greatest Jews of all time[1394] and eulogized as a great "patriot" and defender of the country.[1395]

Salomon de Rothschild

The young international banker-in-training Salomon de Rothschild came to America in 1859 on a two-year tour to survey the business holdings and prospects of his family's massive House of Rothschild bank. He was possibly the most publicly racist of the Rothschild clan and the most expressive of white supremacist beliefs. He endorsed Black slavery, denounced voting rights, hated Lincoln, and disapproved of the most egalitarian aspects of the United States Constitution.[1396] With regard to Asians, he set the attitudinal tone for his American coreligionists. Rothschild believed that

> The Japanese are all very ugly and effeminate; they are wrinkled like baked apples and often deeply pitted with smallpox scars. Their hair is shaved in front…like circus clowns….They have no taste for the arts and prefer a child's toy…[1397]

On his visit to the slave plantations of Cuba,

Rothschild observed that the owner named Dalcour "owns 330 Negroes" and

> employs some Chinese, but these eat more than they work, and we were shown one of them who was not satisfied with twelve pounds of meat and fruit a day.[1398]

Benjamin Kohlberg

Benjamin Kohlberg of Stockton, California, a prominent Jew and a board member of Temple Israel, objected to a Chinese contingent's participation in the 1899 Independence Day parade and threatened to form another parade in opposition. He reportedly said that he does not believe an American citizen should "turn out" with Chinese. Though the parade occurred, it was reported that

> the parade committee had an exceedingly difficult task to get the Chinese to turn out after President Kohlberg stirred up a hornet's nest. The [Chinese] thought that the dissatisfaction was general and were afraid to appear lest they should be attacked or pelted with stones and eggs.[1399]

Abraham Ruef

Political boss Abe Ruef gained control of San Francisco after securing the 1901 election of Eugene E. Schmitz as mayor. Ruef was called by one scholar "the most able and most crooked political boss San Francisco has ever seen." Ultimately he was caught, convicted, and imprisoned for bribery and

extortion, but not before leading the city in its attempts to destroy its Asian community. In 1903, Ruef's Union Labor Party ran on a platform that included "equal rights to all"—except that its own stated policy was that "We favor the absolute exclusion of all Asiatics—Japanese as well as Chinese."[1400]

Ruef chaired a committee of San Francisco officials that seized upon the disastrous earthquake and fire of 1906 to try to evict the Asians and restrict them from rebuilding their destroyed neighborhood. Ruef told his charges that it "is taken for granted from the first that the Chinese must not be allowed to return to the desirable area that Chinatown occupied."[1401] The Chinese had occupied some of the most valuable real estate in the city; thus, the fire and subsequent evacuation were seen as an opportunity for whites to steal Asian-owned land. As Ruef himself explained: confine the Chinese to one encampment so that "they might be moved more advantageously to permanent quarters when secured."[1402] The committee itself was a collection of political arch-enemies whose only common ground, according to a scholar, "was abiding racism and hatred for the Chinese." The relocation of the Asians was thwarted only by stiff resistance from the displaced Asians and the Chinese government, which threatened economic retaliation if the plan materialized.[1403] Ruef also partook in the effort to segregate all Asian students from white so that, according to his school board's reasoning, "our children" would not be "affected by associations with pupils of the Mongolian race."[1404]

Morris Hillquit

Born in Latvia as Moses Hilkowitz, socialist labor leader Morris Hillquit helped found the

United Hebrew Trades. In 1904, he went to the Socialist political convention and supported a resolution calling for the restriction of the immigration of "backward races." He said that "you may call this measure reactionary, but it is absolutely necessary if we are to avoid destroying all union organization." In 1907, Hillquit again vented against the Chinese, saying that "We have no racial prejudice against them, but we conclude with sorrow that they are unorganizable."[1405] He condemned the principle of exclusion but, in effect, endorsed the practice. According to one scholar, "The resolution of veiled racial exclusion became permanent policy" of the heavily Jewish Socialist Party of America.[1406]

Victor L. Berger

Victor L. Berger, a founding member of the Socialist Party of America, expressed his willingness to fight for "all your wives and children" against the "menace of Asiatic immigration."[1407] He believed that the United States and Canada must be kept "white man's countries" if socialism was to have a chance of success, and he feared that America might become "a black-and-yellow country within a few generations." To Berger, not just white womanhood was at stake when it came to "Asiatic immigration," but indeed all civilization was under imminent threat by the "invading" Asians.[1408]

In 1910, the same year he won election to the United States Congress, the Socialist Party Congress submitted a resolution calling for the "unconditional exclusion" of all "Mongolian races" because they constituted a menace to "the most aggressive, militant and intelligent elements of our working class population."[1409] His racial outlook was described by his biographer:

> He held the pyramidal view…[and] segregationist view: that is, there were definite ethnic lines dividing superior and inferior peoples. Whites were at the top of the color pyramid, yellow below, and black at the bottom. Distinguishing even further, Berger was convinced that among the whites, Teutons and Anglo-Saxons had greater potential than did Latins and Slavs. The former were far more educable than the latter.[1410]

As the first socialist in Congress, Berger's first assignment was the committee overseeing the District of Columbia, with its large and underrepresented Black population. "But his racist attitudes" kept him from addressing any of their needs while in this important and influential position. His own Socialist party

> undertook no meaningful struggles against second-class citizenship, and… remained indifferent to the plight of the black population. Those most unrepresented and oppressed of Americans were invisible to the only congressional representative of the workers of the world.[1411]

Solomon Heydenfeldt

California Supreme Court Justice Solomon Heydenfeldt did his part on behalf of the judicial wing of the anti-Asian movement. The Charleston, South Carolina-born jurist heard a case in 1854 in which a white man challenged his murder conviction on the grounds that the only witnesses against him were Asian and therefore unbelievable.

The murderer's appeal was based on a California statute of 1850 which read that "No Black, or Mulatto person, or Indian, shall be allowed to give evidence in favor of, or against a white man." The Heydenfeldt court ruling set extraordinary legal precedents for the future of the Black man and woman. To summarize, the ruling said:

- Everyone who is not white is Black; therefore the Chinese are Black.
- American Indians are descended from the Mongolian race; therefore Chinese are Indians.
- Sound public policy required that white citizens be protected from the "corrupting influences of degrading castes."

The pro-slavery Heydenfeldt was nonetheless eulogized in 1890 by the Jewish press as having a "kindly nature [with] views so broad and liberal that individuals of all shades of belief…found shelter under his intellectual wing."[1412]

The Anti-Asian Jewish Press

The Jewish press eagerly and unreservedly joined the war against the Asians, forcefully voicing the bigotry of its Jewish readership.[1413] San Francisco's *Jewish Progress* warned Jews of those "barbarians of the East." The Asians, it said, were "an element so depraved and vicious" that white American "lives would be in peril and extensive property in danger of destruction." The *Progress* derisively editorialized: "The pig-tailed disciples of Confucius are not to be allowed to wallow in American politics." It referred to the Chinese as "the

almond-eyed natives of China." "[I]t will be a happy day for California when these disciples of Confucius depart for their Flowery Kingdom, never more to return."[1414]

The *Jewish Record* was one of several Jewish newspapers that ridiculed the Chinese, referring to them by the terms "John Chinaman" and "Celestials" and often mocking their speech in "pidgin English." Typical of this malicious Jewish "humor" was this example:

> "What are the wild waves saying, John?" sang out a young Californian to a Chinaman on the beach. "Washee, washee," calmly replied the celestial, with a grin.[1415]

Some articles sought to preemptively insulate Jews from similar vilification by creating a wide gulf in the public perception of the two immigrant groups:

> The Chinese are as disgusting as the lowest type of the digger Indian, as treacherous as the greaser and as unprincipled as the Lazaroni. They… contaminate the atmosphere where they are packed like sardines in tiers to the depth of thirty feet underground.[1416]

One Jewish letter to the editor decried, admitted, and justified racism all in one sentence:

> It is not becoming a true Israelite to persecute or speak ill of any human race, but self preservation and actual observation compel me to express my

> utter disgust with the coolies and slaves brought here by the thousands.[1417]

The *American Israelite* was edited by the most prominent and influential rabbi in American history, Isaac Mayer Wise, who opined on "[t]he festive Chinaman and his precious pig-tail," speculating that

> it will most likely be in the dim, distant future when we shall be rid of the almond-eyed demons….[T]hey are a great curse, and the sooner this country is rid of them the better.[1418]

The *American Israelite*'s western correspondent, Isidor N. Choynski, attacked the Chinese for taking jobs from Caucasian workers. "If ever there was a blot on American civilization it is this Chinese curse," wrote the B'nai B'rith official. The Chinese, he charged, were selling children, "females preferred, who are raised for the vilest of purposes,"[1419] and yet Choynski preferred some Asians to others. The Japanese, he thought,

> are more honest than the Chinese but do not make good cooks. They all dress dudish and affect the airs of noblemen…. [T]he Japs look decent and are far preferable to the heathen Chinee [sic]; yet [they are] as close and calculating as their moon-eyed cousins.[1420]

According to John Higham, "both the South and San Francisco fought for decades to uphold white supremacy in the face of a colored race, the Negro in one, the Oriental in the other." He quotes the Jewish weekly *Asmonean* (vol. 4 [1851], p. 36),

which approvingly reprinted an editorial:

> In vain have nations and sects hurled anathemas against…the Jew….He belonged to a superior race….He was a WHITE man—he was of the God-appointed, ruling, progressive race of humanity, for such all nature, all experience, all the philosophy of facts, and the attestations of religion, prove the white race to be.[1421]

Michael H. De Young, the Jewish owner of the *San Francisco Chronicle*,[1422] the largest and most influential newspaper on the west coast, aided the anti-Asian cause with a personal crusade of his own —a series of sensational headlines[1423] targeting the character of the Chinese and Japanese:

> Crime And Poverty Go Hand In Hand With Asiatic Labor
>
> Brown Men Are Made Citizens Illegally
>
> Japanese A Menace To American Women
>
> Adult Japanese Crowd Out Children
>
> Brown Peril Assumes National Proportions
>
> Brown Artisans Steal Brains Of Whites
>
> The Japanese Invasion, The Problem Of The Hour

THE YELLOW PERIL—HOW JAPANESE CROWD OUT THE WHITE RACE

BROWN MEN AN EVIL IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MUTINOUS MONGOLS

A FILTHY LOT

RAPID SPREAD OF MONGOLIAN VICE

TRICK OF THE WILY HEATHEN

Under De Young's control, the *Chronicle* echoed every slander in the Gompers/Kahn anti-Asian arsenal. And whereas the *Chronicle* opposed Labor on every other issue, it found common ground with them on the anti-Asian front. The *Chronicle* assailed the language, social habits, and the purported non-assimilability of Asians, and it expressed the belief that "the Chinese are suffering from certain loathsome and incurable sexual diseases."[1424]

The Chinese lied in court, De Young maintained. "[U]sing their wealth freely to corrupt juries, they constantly defeat the ends of justice." The *Chronicle*, "with its Jewish-born publisher," took a chilling view of American liberties:

> There are employers who would like to have them in unlimited numbers…but the mass of our people strongly favors the development of America exclusively by the *Aryan races*.[1425]

Further, De Young spoke in unmistakably Hitlerian terms when he asserted:

> The people of the states claim the right to discriminate against any aliens whom they deem objectionable in respect to all matters involving social intercourse and ownership of land….[1426]

The *Chronicle*'s solution to the segregation of Japanese children in San Francisco schools was simple enough: "The most effective way of keeping Japanese out of the public schools is to keep them out of the country."[1427]

Some Jewish voices did defend the Chinese and thought the heavy Jewish participation in the anti-Asian movement was unbecoming of their "race." Most of these voices came from far outside California, though; and those defending the Chinese also came under *Jewish* attack for their positions. And those few faint voices inside the state had clear economic motives for their support of the Chinese laborer.[1428]

Some of the "pro-Chinese" dissent was motivated by fear of the precedent set by anti-Asian racism. "[T]o stop immigration of Chinamen," wrote one, "is to proclaim to the world that, after an experiment of one century, the United States is forced to the conclusion that its citizens cannot compete with foreigners."[1429] David Solis-Cohen was horrified at the rabbinical role in anti-Asian racism, but wanted it known that

> I have no desire to appear as a champion in their cause…There is without doubt much degradation among them, there is without doubt much which is immorality to us if not to them….Nothing could possibly be further from my thoughts than to conceive a parallel between them

> as a class and my own brethren; there is no similarity of nature and disposition.[1430]

Philadelphia's rabbi Sabato Morais denounced the anti-Chinese bill as un-American, worthy of the dark ages, and even condemned the rabbis and Jewish laymen who had supported the bill.[1431] But no matter the motive, these Jewish voices of tolerance were but a ripple in the torrent of Jewish bigotry.

1367 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations" part 2:139-41. The Choynski family hired a Chinese servant, who soon became dissatisfied and quit. Several others they hired quickly left, never to return. They later found that the first man had left a mark in the home to warn future Chinese servants that the Choynskis were undesirable employers. See Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1:33.

1368 Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 233.

1369 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:138; Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 220-21; *The Western Journal of Isaac Mayer Wise, 1877,* ed. William M. Kramer (Berkeley, CA: Western Jewish History Center, 1974), 33-34.

1370 Even legendary racists like Nathan Bedford Forrest, the founder of the Ku Klux Klan, invested $5,000 in a scheme to bring in 1,000 Chinese laborers to build railroads in Mississippi. See William C. Harris, *The Day of the Carpetbagger: Republican Reconstruction in Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1979), 501-2.

1371 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:136; ibid., part 1:34.

1372 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1:25; Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 224 n. 18.

1373 Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 223.

1374 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1:24; ibid., part 2:152-53.

1375 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:135; John Higham, *Send These to Me: Jews and Other Immigrants in Urban America* (New York: Atheneum, 1975), 164: In early San Francisco, Jews "helped to construct the basic institutions of the city," even as the city, he writes, "fought for decades to uphold white supremacy…"

1376 Emphasis ours. Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1:35.

1377 Burton Alan Boxerman, "Kahn of California," *California Historical Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (winter 1976): 340. Julius Kahn served from 1898 to 1902 and from 1904 until his death in 1924; he was a

one-time candidate for Speaker of the House (the only Jew to have ever been seriously considered for the post). See David G. Dalin, "Jewish and Non-Partisan Republicanism in San Francisco, 1911-1963," in *The Jews of the West: The Metropolitan Years*, ed. Moses Rischin (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society; Berkeley: Western Jewish History Center of the Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, 1979), 113.

1378 Harry Schneiderman, "Julius Kahn," in *The American Jewish Year Book*, ed. Harry Schneiderman (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1925), 27:242; Dalin, "Jewish and Non-Partisan Republicanism," 114; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 24. "At 18 Julius made his stage debut as 'Shylock' at the Baldwin Theatre." See "Julius Kahn" entry in *San Francisco Jews: Old Traditions on a New Frontier,* by Irena Narell and the Western Jewish History Center of the Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum (Berkeley: Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, 1976).

1379 Among Kahn's triumphs of oratory are speeches in the House of Representatives dated April 4, 1902; Feb. 18, 1907; Dec. 17, 1912; Dec. 9, 1920. See also *Congressional Record*, 18 Feb. 1907, H3224; McKee, "'The Chinese Must Go!'" 48; Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (1909; reprint, Arno Press, 1969), 244-45, who says twenty bills relating to Chinese immigration were offered. Also, Kaufman, *The Samuel Gompers Papers,* 5:459 n. 4; Hill, "Labor Unions and the Negro," 480; McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 60. Kahn had a record of racist legislation, including U.S. intervention in the Philippines, government distribution of free weapons to Southern militias (a.k.a. "rifle clubs"), and a prohibition on "intermarriage of whites with negroes or Mongolians." See Boxerman, "Kahn of California," 341, 344, 346-47; *Congressional Record*, 8 Feb. 1913, H2870; *Congressional Record*, 62d Cong., 3d sess., 1912-13, vol. 49, index, 132. Compare his "intermarriage law" with the 1935 Nazi *Law of Protection of the German Race: German Blood and German Honor*: "Marriages between Jews and nationals of German or kindred blood are forbidden…" See Jerome A. Chanes, *Antisemitism: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 110.

1380 The comparison to Nazism is also in Hall, "California's Japanese Americans," 19.

1381 *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3688-89, H3690.

1382 Ibid., H3690. He then described the inner workings of what he alleged was the Chinese international prostitution trade, which was remarkably similar in every depraved detail to that which the Jews had been operating for decades. See Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870–1939* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982) and Robert Rockaway's review of it in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 2, *The Challenge of Modernity and Jewish Orthodoxy*, ed. Peter Y. Medding (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1986), 310. See also Isaac Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949), 132-33 n. 57.

1383 *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3693. A recent study confirmed that in the late 1800s in at least one U.S. city "Jewish

merchants dominated the wholesale-retail…liquor trade, and the tobacco trade." See Kathleen C. Berkeley, *"Like a Plague of Locusts": From an Antebellum Town to a New South City: Memphis, Tennessee, 1850-1880* (New York: Garland, 1991), 140; Howard Morley Sachar, *The Course of Modern Jewish History* (New York: Dell, 1958), 344. According to ISJL, "Statesville, North Carolina," many Jewish settlers moved away, "especially after alcohol prohibition killed the local liquor industry." According to Stephen Birmingham, *"The Rest of Us": The Rise of America's Eastern European Jews* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984), 182, "[B]y 1920, much of the Prohibition liquor trade was in Jewish hands, and a good number of the speakeasies and nightclubs…were also Jewish-owned." Also ibid., 198, 199. See Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010), 121. Samuel Bronfman, the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants, built the Seagram Company into the world's largest distiller and marketer of spirits and wines, which, during Prohibition, netted illegal profits that "amounted to close to eight hundred million dollars" from the smuggling of liquor to the United States. In fact, Bronfman "was bootleggin' enough whiskey across the Canadian border to double the size of Lake Erie. It was no wonder that wags in the liquor trade were beginning to refer to Lake Erie as 'the Jewish lake.'" See Brenner, *Jews in America Today*, 67; Birmingham, *"The Rest of Us,"* 156, 233.

1384 *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3690. This harks back to another Jew, a slave-trading South Carolinian who wrote poetry in his newspaper advertisements to better sell his enslaved Blacks. The first two of five stanzas in his 1794 ad read: "ABRAHAM SEIXAS,/All so gracious,/Once again does offer/His service pure/For to secure/ Money in the coffer./He has for sale/Some negroes male,/Will suit full well for grooms./He has likewise/Some of their wives/Can make clean, dirty rooms." See *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* 1:296 and *Jews Selling Blacks* (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 2010), 8, 91.

1385 Julius Kahn, "Chinatown—Its Lights and Shadows—Its Lessons on the Chinese Problem," *Washington Post*, 2 March 1902; *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3694-95.

1386 The India-based Jewish Sassoon family (known as "the Rothschilds of the East") actually held a monopoly of the opium trade and profited immensely from the opium wars in the mid-1800s, whose intent was to force the drug into China. See *JEncy* (1905), s.v. "Sassoons." According to Stanley Jackson, *The Sassoons* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1968), 22-23: "[T]he drug developed into one of the East India Company's most profitable commodities." In the 1700s, at least one-quarter of the company's shareholders were Jews. Cecil Roth, *History of the Marranos* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1932), 286.

1387 *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3694, H3692; *Congressional Record*, 18 Feb. 1907, H3231.

1388 *Congressional Record*, 18 Feb. 1907, H3231; William M. Kramer and Robert J. Hoffman, "Congressman Julius Kahn of California," part 2, *Western States Jewish History* 19, no. 2 (Jan.

1987): 147. Jewish state senator "Eddie" I. Wolfe, of San Francisco, "emphasized the crowding of Japanese children into the schools and the consequent inconvenience to the white pupils." See Thomas Andrew Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese-American Crises* (Gloucester, MA: P. Smith, 1964), 11.

1389 *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3693. Some whites were making this same argument against the Jews in Brooklyn. See Mensch, "Social Pathology in Urban America," 15-16. Also Mark Rosentraub and Delbert Taebel, "Jewish Enterprise in Transition: From Collective Self-Help to Orthodox Capitalism," in *Self-Help in Urban America: Patterns of Minority Economic Development*, ed. Scott Cummings (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1980), 195. See also Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1:12, 23. For more examples of Kahn's racism, see *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3688; *Biloxi (Mississippi) Daily Herald*, 5 Jan. 1907, 3.

1390 Ironically, Kahn praised Germans in a statement before the Senate Committee on Immigration:

> I am satisfied, however, from my intimate knowledge of German character, that if the interests of German mechanics and laborers were jeopardized by the threatened invasion of thousands of the pauper laborers from the Chinese Empire, it would not be long before the German Parliament would pass all needed legislation to afford the necessary protection to her own working classes.

As they did against Jews thirty years later. *Congressional Record—Senate*, vol. 35, 4 April 1902.

1391 Boxerman, "Kahn of California," 341; Dalin, "Jewish and Non-Partisan Republicanism," 114.

1392 Schneiderman, "Julius Kahn," 236.

1393 Narell and Magnes Memorial Museum, *San Francisco Jews*.

1394 "Jews Pick Leaders of Faith in America," *NYT,* 4 Dec. 1925, 11. At least 9 of the 30 Jews listed in this 1925 survey were either slave owners or notorious racists—one even financed the Klan (Judah P. Benjamin), another (Bernard M. Baruch) was a Klan admirer.

1395 "Eulogize Julius Kahn at House Memorial," *NYT,* 23 Feb. 1925, 3.

1396 Salomon de Rothschild, *A Casual View of America: The Home Letters of Salomon De Rothschild, 1859-1861* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1961), 3, 8-9, 22, 26-27, 43, 85-86, 88, 90, 102-3, 112-13, 118-24, 128-29; Derek Wilson, *Rothschild: The Wealth and Power of a Dynasty* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), 185; Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker, 1849-1999* (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), 116.

1397 Rothschild, *A Casual View of America*, 41, 42-43 n. 2, 51-53, 55-56; David Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue: The Fortunes of August Belmont* (New York: Dial Press, 1981), 190.

1398 Rothschild, *A Casual View of America,* 99, 105 n. 4, 102, 103.

1399 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:147-48.

1400 Raymond Leslie Buell, "The Development of the Anti-

Japanese Agitation in the United States," *Political Science Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (Dec. 1922): 611; Hall, "California's Japanese Americans," 18-19; "Platform Adopted by Convention of Union Labor Party," Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco, 2004, http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist1/ulp.html.

1401 Gordon Thomas and Max Morgan Witts, *The San Francisco Earthquake* (New York: Souvenir Press, 1971), 259. Ruef later admitted that he "had earmarked the area for European development."

1402 Philip L. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906: How San Francisco Nearly Destroyed Itself* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2005), 291. Ruef said the move "would be for the Chinese [people's] own protection and safety and happiness…" The Jewish-owned *NYT* supported the racist removal, calling San Francisco's Chinatown a "blemish and absurdity" that threatened "womankind." See ibid., 294-95.

1403 Gladys Hansen, "Relocation of Chinatown," Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco, 1996, http://www.sfmuseum.org/chin/relocate.html. See also Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake*, 290.

1404 Buell, "The Development of the Anti-Japanese Agitation," 622-23ff.

1405 Ira Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement, 1897-1912* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1952), 276-77, 284, 286; Richard W. Fox, "The Paradox of 'Progressive' Socialism: The Case of Morris Hillquit, 1901-1914," *American Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (May 1974): 139; B. Gornberg et al., *On Jews, America, and Immigration: A Socialist Perspective* (Cincinnati, OH: American Jewish Archives, 1980), 42-43.

1406 Sally M. Miller, *Victor Berger and the Promise of Constructive Socialism, 1910-1920* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1973), 53; also, Norma Fain Pratt, *Morris Hillquit: A Political History of an American Jewish Socialist* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979), 92-96, and on his Jewishness, chapter 13. Also see Charles Leinenweber, "Class and Ethnic Bases of New York City Socialism, 1904-15," *Labor History* 22, no. 1 (winter 1981), 50: "Jewish garment workers alone constituted one-fourth of enrolled Socialists, and the proportion of Jews overall surely approached 60 percent."

1407 Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 30.

1408 Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement*, 131-33, 278-79, 286; Miller, *Victor Berger*, 52.

1409 Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement*, 282.

1410 Miller, *Victor Berger,* 28. In 1911 Berger denounced "Slovenians, Italians, Greeks, Russians, and Armenians" as "modern white coolies." Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues,* 86.

1411 Miller, *Victor Berger*, 81-82.

1412 William M. Kramer, "Solomon Heydenfeldt (1816-1890): Supreme Court Judge," *Western States Jewish History* 28, no. 3 (1996): 133, 138. See *People v. Hall,* 4 Cal. 399 (1854); Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* (1919), 59. The Atlanta B'nai B'rith leader Leo Frank also challenged his 1913 murder conviction on the basis of what he considered the inadmissibility of "negro testimony" against him.

1413 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:152; Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 223-33.

1414 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1: 23, 27-28.

1415 Ibid., part 2:150; Becker, *The Course of Exclusion*, 205.

1416 Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 228, 226; Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:151.

1417 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1:22-23.

1418 Ibid., part 2:136-37.

1419 Ibid., part 1:30-32; Robert Singerman and Elinor Grumet, eds., "Wayward Etchings: I. N. Choynski Visits," *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (Jan. 1979): 120.

1420 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:149.

1421 John Higham, "Social Discrimination Against Jews in America, 1830-1930," *PAJHS* 47, no. 1 (Sept. 1957): 25-26 n. 87.

1422 See Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985*, vol. 1 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 204, 322. The *Chronicle* was founded in 1865 by brothers Charles and Michael H. deYoung. See Becker, *The Course of Exclusion*, 152.

1423 The headlines are from February 13 to March 13, 1905, as reproduced in Roger Daniels, *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States Since 1850* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1988), 116 [n. 36], but the campaign "continued for more than a year." Daniels, *Prisoners Without Trial*, 10; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 24-27, and 126 n. 27:

> M.H. de Young presented his collection of Japanese art to the City museum later named for him. The irony that the publisher of the paper credited with initiating the anti-Japanese campaign in the United States collected the art of Japan appeared lost on the *Chronicle*, but on numerous occasions over the years the paper described how it admired Japan and the Japanese people, it just didn't want them as residents of this country.

Also, Becker, *The Course of Exclusion,* 24, 25, 74-75.

1424 Becker, *The Course of Exclusion*, 2, 3, 25; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 26; Carey McWilliams, *Prejudice: Japanese-Americans: Symbol of Racial Intolerance* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1944), 18-19.

1425 Emphasis ours. Becker, *The Course of Exclusion*, 66, 115.

1426 Ibid., 115.

1427 Ibid., 114; Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 24-26, 126 n. 29; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 83; McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 142-45.

1428 Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 224, 229-30; Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1:18, 24-25; part 2:134. Also, Kramer and Hoffman, "Congressman Julius Kahn of California," part 2:146-47; Boxerman, "Kahn of California," 349. A December 27, 1906, letter from a Jewish correspondent in Red Bluff, California, shared Kahn's and De Young's biases against "the little brown men," who, in San Francisco, were "changing a respectable residence section into an Oriental city." Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:149 n. 124.

1429 Clar and Kramer, “Chinese-Jewish Relations,” part 1:26-27; McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 59.

1430 Clar and Kramer, “Chinese-Jewish Relations,” part 1:25-26.

1431 Ibid., part 2:135.

Why the Asians?

Why did the American Jewish leadership invest so much energy in such an undemocratic and bigoted pursuit as Asian exclusion? One purely racial reason is evident in the 1879 debate in Congress, when the incredulous Gentile senator from Massachusetts, George Frisbie Hoar, asked the Jewish Louisiana senator Benjamin F. Jonas, "Why will you not remember the terrible history of the men of your own race and blood, and help me resist a like savage treatment of another race?" Jonas emphatically rejected the suggestion, saying, "Mr. Hoar, the Jews are a superior race. They are not to be classed with the Chinese."[1432]

Such ethnic Jewish arrogance is apparent throughout the exclusion campaign, but in the midst of their Asian-character assassination, the Jewish leadership exhibited a perverse admiration for the Asians' accomplishments in trade and manufacturing. Representative Kahn's description of Chinese merchants seems to parallel perfectly the Jewish immigrant experience in America:

> Many of the merchants of that race [the Chinese] in this country came here as coolies [common laborers]. After having saved a little money they open a little shop and thereafter are classed as merchants.…Perhaps there is no people under the sun with the imitative ability and adaptability for all kinds of work and every condition of climate and environment of the Chinese race.… [T]hese people can readily acquire the art of manufacturing fabrics by the most modern and improved machinery; and

> working as they do from sunrise to sunset practically the entire year for wages that would not support a 10-year boy in this country is there any doubt…that [they] will ultimately absorb the greater part of the trade…[1433]

The Asian culture posed a unique economic threat to the Jews, who by many accounts had gained mastery of western trade.[1434] Other "nonwhite" groups who had been in long-term contact with the Caucasian had been physically and economically subdued and geographically confined. Millions of Indians had been slaughtered, many thousands confined to reservations. Millions of Blacks—former slaves—having endured generations of slavery and enforced ignorance, were locked in servitude on Southern cotton fields. Asians, on the other hand, had come to America with an entrepreneurial history very similar to that of the Jews. Jews no doubt recalled that their merchants in the seventeenth century were kept out of Indian Ocean commerce by the superior business prowess of Chinese shippers and middlemen.[1435] The Chinese were resourceful and culturally autonomous and knew exactly how to establish a viable and independent economy. Congressman Kahn spoke disparagingly of that skill:

> He soon branches out in business for himself as a contractor, a restaurant keeper, a florist, or some other vocation of that kind. Now, that in itself is commendable enough: but the moment he has put up his sign he begins to cut the bottom out of prices. As a general rule he has no family to support, for most of the Japanese that come to the United

> States are males. They are not accompanied by their wives and children to any great extent, as is the case with European immigrants.[1436]

In fact, the Asians were thrifty in their spending habits and wise in their investments and tied to a national history that includes an ancient commercial résumé. As did Kahn, Gompers denigrated a practice among the Chinese that he would have boasted of among Jews: "the Chinese had, in thirty years, sent or carried to China, $800,000,000."[1437] Kahn pointed out an important characteristic of the Chinese business model—one that makes the Chinese a formidable economic power:

> [T]oday in China, if you want a concession for anything there—for a railroad, for a mine, for a machine shop, for anything of that kind—there is invariably a provision inserted in the franchise that you must also open a school for the education of Chinese youth in the particular industry for which the concession is granted.…[W]ho will deny that when they have become proficient in the industries and professions which they are studying they will do their own developing without the aid or assistance of "foreign devils?"[1438]

This was the profile of a people who resisted exploitation and external control, unlike the inexperienced Black ex-slave, who, lacking this foundation, became easy prey. Using a model very similar to the Jewish family networks that flourished in the centers of slavery and Jim Crow,

all the merchants in the Chinese districts were Chinese, importing their wares from China or from other Chinese manufacturers and suppliers. The Chinese manned the large construction and railroad projects underway throughout America, but their paychecks became the building blocks of a uniquely Chinese economy.[1439]

As a mercantile people with an extraordinary presence in California commerce, Jews were profoundly impressed, and threatened, by the growing Asian presence in America.[1440] Through their own genius the Asians had driven out the white skilled workers in the manufacture of shoes, cigars, brooms, underclothing, and overalls—all specifically Jewish trades. "The Chinese have got the Jews by the horns," wrote one Jewish newspaper.[1441] Another wrote that "the crafty Mongolian has advanced a step further, and beats the Jews and the Yankees at their own game in the most uncomfortable manner."[1442] Mr. A. Seligson, of the *Jewish Progress*, declared that "[i]t is impossible to compete with the Chinese."[1443] The editor of San Francisco's *Hebrew* complained that the farmhands, fruit-pickers, and cigar makers are mainly Chinese, and in other fields "the Celestial has the inside track."[1444] This represented all the ingredients for a potent economic rivalry[1445]—a clash of economic titans—and so the Jewish reaction to the Asian challenge was to leverage the power of their whiteness to destroy their most able competitors.

Rep. Julius Kahn himself made this plain: "[T]he Chinaman…has a remarkable aptitude for trade. He is a born trader…" "Your white laborers… [will] soon realize that it is a struggle for existence between Caucasian civilization and the civilization of Asia."[1446]

1432 George F. Hoar, *Autobiography of Seventy Years,* vol. 2 (New

York: Scribner's Sons, 1903), 59-60. Hoar contrasts Jonas's response with that of the Black senator from Mississippi, Blanche K. Bruce, who said that given the history of his own race, he "could not consent to vote for any measure which discriminated against any man by reason of his race or color."

1433 *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3689, H3691-92.

1434 See for instance Peter R. Decker, "Jewish Merchants in San Francisco: Social Mobility on the Urban Frontier," *AJH* 68, no. 4 (June 1979): 396-407.

1435 Marcus Arkin, *Aspects of Jewish Economic History* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1975), 96.

1436 *Congressional Record*, 18 Feb. 1907, H3230. Also, McKee, *Chinese Exclusion*, 57. Actually, a significant number of Jewish immigrants came to America as single males. See Rowena Olegario, "'That Mysterious People': Jewish Merchants, Transparency, and Community in Mid-Nineteenth Century America," *Business History Review* 73, no. 2 (summer 1999): 164.

1437 Gompers and Gutstadt, *Meat vs. Rice,* 31.

1438 *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3691. Kahn here complains about the requirement to train Chinese youngsters in any industry whites wanted to operate in China, but this is precisely what Gompers' own San Francisco Cigar Makers' Union attempted to do in 1883. "In…an effort to replace Chinese with white cigar makers… [the union] set up an apprentice school for white youngsters, which also failed." See Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy*, 215 n. 34.

1439 See the case made by William Trant, "Jew and Chinaman," *North American Review* 195 (Feb. 1912): 249-60. Also, *The Western Journal of Isaac Mayer Wise, 1877,* ed. William M. Kramer (Berkeley, CA: Western Jewish History Center, 1974), 26, 29-30.

1440 Henry J. Labatt, "The Commercial Position of the Jews in California–1856," *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* 4, no. 1 (Oct. 1971): 21-24 [reprinted as "The Jews in California Commerce–1856," *Western States Jewish History* 24, no. 1 (Oct. 1991): 34-36]; Robert E. Levinson, *The Jews in the California Gold Rush* (New York: KTAV; Berkeley, CA: Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum, 1978), 26, 27-28, 36, 38, 53, 61 and passim; Don W. Wilson, "Pioneer Jews in California and Arizona, 1849-1875," *Journal of the West* 6, no. 2 (April 1967): 226-31.

1441 Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 222; Gompers and Gutstadt, *Meat vs. Rice*, 12.

1442 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 1:33. The most prominent American rabbi, Isaac Mayer Wise, claimed, "the main cause of the fright is this: some of our Jews here are largely engaged in manufacturing…[and] must have cheap labor, hence it is necessary to engage Chinamen. In some factories 300 and even 500 are at work." See ibid., 30. For comments on Jewish business in the Pacific West, see Singerman and Grumet, "Wayward Etchings," 121, 121 n. 1, 124, 128, 129, 133.

1443 Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 231.

1444 Clar and Kramer, "Chinese-Jewish Relations," part 2:134.

1445 Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," 225.

1446 *Congressional Record*, 4 April 1902, H3692; *Congressional Record*, 18 Feb. 1907, H3230.

Conclusion

In the end, the Labor Movement is revered in the mind of the American public for the gains it made "for the workingman." The eight-hour work day, job security, pensions, sick leave, job safety, collective bargaining agreements, paid holidays, vacations, company-financed health insurance, cost-of-living increases—all are benefits credited to unionization. Equally a part of the Movement's legacy, yet virtually ignored in the history of America, are the Movement's leadership role in destroying the labor options of Blacks and undermining their freedom struggle after slavery; its marginalization of Latinos; its Hitlerian assault on Asians; and its pursuit of all these racist strategies at the direction of Jewish leadership—in short, its role in making America "a white man's country."

Jewish icons Samuel Gompers and Julius Kahn have emerged from the spheres of labor and government with records as destructive to Black progress as those of any hooded nightrider. Nonetheless, the most prominent American Jew (and future NAACP board member), American Jewish Committee leader Louis Marshall, viewed these men thus:

> When anybody says something about the patriotism of the Jew, point to Gompers and to Kahn. Give us a chance in any country and we will show what patriotism is.[1447]

1447 "Asks Jews to Back World Court Move," *NYT,* 5 Jan. 1925, 16.

Jews, Lynching, and the Ku Klux Klan

This glorification of the lethal power of the sharp blade accompanied a way of life in which the organized slaughter of other human beings, along with the destruction and looting of their property and the subjugation and exploitation of their persons, appears to have been normal.

—

Description of the tribal warlords of the Caucasus region, 2000 B.C., from Riane Eisler's

The Chalice and The Blade

The very embodiment of American racial terrorism is that organization of Caucasian glorification known as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). There is no ambiguity, vacillation, or apology in its position concerning the value of Blacks in American society; nor are there limits to the extremes it will go to maintain its stated goal of absolute white supremacy. By the Klan's moral framework, all whites are categorically superior to all Blacks in every way; hence its fanatical commitment to maintaining a social, political, and economic power structure that reflects that belief.

The Klan's savage tactical handiwork is well known: their most depraved acts fall under the heading of "lynching." Mobs of Caucasian males hunt down innocent Black men, women, and children and commit sadistic acts of ritual torture, including sexual mutilations, whippings, burnings alive, decapitations, flesh and eye gougings, amputations, bone crushings, point-blank shootings, stabbings, tree, bridge, or lamppost hangings, and horse or vehicle rope-draggings—all culminating in their scavenging for souvenirs amid the desecrated, dismembered, or scorched remains of the Black victims.[1448]

It is usually stated as fact that the Klan was historically "against Blacks, Jews, and Catholics," when in fact the KKK had many Jewish members, sympathizers, and supporters.

1448 W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (1935; reprint, New York: Simon & Schuster, Touchstone, 1995), 674-84; *Report of the Joint Select Committee to Inquire into the*

Condition of Affairs in the Late Insurrectionary States, So Far As Regards the Execution of the Laws, and Safety of the Lives and Property of the Citizens of the United States and Testimony Taken, 42d Cong., 2d sess., 1872, S. Rept. 41, serial 1484-1496; Ralph Ginzburg, *One Hundred Years of Lynchings* (1962; reprint, Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1988). See for instance "Roasted Him: Sam Hose, a Murderer, Was Burned at the Stake," *Grand Rapids (Michigan) Herald*, 24 April 1899, 1. The term "lynch" is derived from the Revolutionary War activities of Charles Lynch of Virginia. Colonel Lynch organized his own court system and sentenced suspected British sympathizers to a range of punishments, from "tar and feathering" and whipping to hanging from a tree in his yard.

Historical Background of White American Terrorism

6. We want an immediate end to the police brutality and mob attacks against the so-called Negro throughout the United States. We believe that the Federal government should intercede to see that black men and women tried in white courts receive justice in accordance with the laws of the land, or allow us to build a new nation for ourselves, dedicated to justice, freedom and liberty.

—The
Most
Honorable
Elijah
Muhammad

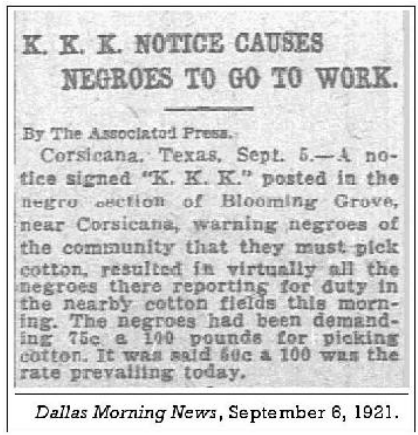
The Ku Klux Klan emerged as a significant influence in American society during four separate historical periods: it was launched at the end of the Civil War, reemerged in the World War I era, and resurfaced during the communism scare of the

1950s and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. All these periods were marked by heightened anti-Black rhetoric and racially motivated violence and murder.

The original Ku Klux Klan was born in 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee. It was the brainchild of slave trader and Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest, who was unwilling to accept a peace agreement that included any form of liberty for the Black ex-slave. The Union terms for the Southern rebel states' re-entry into the fold included the rewriting of their constitutions to purge them of racist language and policies. This was a bitter pill for Southerners, who believed that white supremacy was the very essence of their strength and identity as a people. Forrest was among the many who fervently believed in the sacredness of this creed. He regrouped his defeated troops into an insurgent force to reclaim the South from the hated Northern "Yankees" and to reestablish the rule of the plantation elite. They adopted the name Ku Klux Klan after it was suggested that they somehow incorporate the Greek word for circle, *kuklos*.[1449]

But Forrest's fighters were rarely found targeting the Northern troops now stationed in the South; rather, they donned hoods and robes to disguise their identities and rode at night into Black sections to carry out their brutality. Their true motive was to frighten the newly freed defenseless Blacks—the foundation of the Southern economy—into resuming their traditional role as plantation laborers. And this is why the Ku Kluxers were welcomed as the "saviors of the South" by most whites in the region. Virtually all whites shared a common desire to keep Blacks far away from education, the ballot box, and any hopes or dreams they may have entertained about freedom, justice,

equality, or independence.[1450]



K. K. K. NOTICE CAUSES NEGROES TO GO TO WORK.

By The Associated Press.

Corsicana, Texas, Sept. 5.—A notice signed "K. K. K." posted in the negro section of Blooming Grove, near Corsicana, warning negroes of the community that they must pick cotton, resulted in virtually all the negroes there reporting for duty in the nearby cotton fields this morning. The negroes had been demanding 75c a 100 pounds for picking cotton. It was said 50c a 100 was the rate prevailing today.

Dallas Morning News, September 6, 1921.

The Ku Klux Klan as an organization represented nothing new to Southern Blacks. During slavery, roving bands of whites called "paddyrollers" tormented all Blacks—enslaved and "freed"—taking lewd and sadistic pleasure in the rape and torture of Black men, women, and children.[1451] The task of hunting down and persecuting runaway or rebellious Blacks fell to the newest European immigrants, primarily the Irish.[1452] It was no effort at all for this menacing assemblage of Southern white rabble to exchange prewar "paddyrolling" for postwar "night riding." Every white *and Jewish* male citizen was expected to participate in the terrorism, and every citizen was expected to be particularly vigilant in upholding communal fidelity to cherished racial traditions.[1453] Texas merchant, slave owner, Indian killer, Freemason, and devout Jew Adolphus Sterne recorded in his diary his attendance at an 1841 meeting "for the purpose of organizing a Patrol, to keep in due check the negro Population." His patrols checked on the "Blackies," who he thought were "getting rather too free."[1454] This repressive

function became *especially* critical after the war when Southern whites were forced to remove overt discriminations from their constitutions.

The original Klan targeted all signs of Black progress. Black businesses were looted or destroyed, organizers of Black labor were beaten and murdered, Black owners of land desired by whites were driven off, Black religious and political meetings were attacked, schools established for Blacks were burned to the ground, and Black and white teachers were assaulted.[1455] Blacks who refused to work for whites, and Blacks who voted, sat on juries, held office, or testified against whites were all under siege. One proud Ku Klux Klansman was moved to verse:

> Niggers and [Republicans], get out of the way.
>
> We're born of the night and we vanish by day.
>
> No rations have we, but the flesh of man —
>
> And love niggers best—the Ku Klux Klan.
>
> We catch 'em alive and roast 'em whole.
>
> And hand 'em around with a sharpened pole.[1456]

But mass murder was the Klan's forte and they were credited with spawning a wave of 1,300 killings of Black citizens in 1868 alone. The brutality after the Civil War was on such a scale that some in the Klan leadership actually disowned

it—not because they disapproved of the violence against Blacks, but because Southern elites realized the Klan's activities provided the federal government with a justification for continuing its occupation of the South. General Forrest's original organization was in decline from 1868 to 1870, but not before it spun off hundreds of militias, rifle clubs, and assorted terror cells that diligently carried out the Klan agenda.[1457] In 1871, a government investigation concluded:

> The Klan is inflicting summary vengeance on the colored citizens…by breaking into their houses at the dead of night, dragging them from their beds, torturing them in the most inhuman manner, and in many instances murdering.[1458]

Despite its official disbanding, by 1877, with the removal of federal troops, the Klan had won its fight against Black empowerment in the South. In 1883, the Supreme Court essentially sided with the Klan, striking down civil rights laws and clearing the way for the full application of Jim Crow.[1459] The fate of the Black man and woman was left entirely to the terrorists.

1449 Gladys-Marie Fry, *Night Riders in Black Folk History* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1975), 117-19. The *Memphis Appeal* newspaper reported that the name is derived from the Hebrew term "Cu-Clux Clan." James Michael Martinez, *Carpetbaggers, Cavalry, and the Ku Klux Klan: Exposing the Invisible Empire During Reconstruction* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 9. William Garrott Brown, in the Jewish-owned *New York Times,* described the Klan as "a society" of college-aged "young men" looking for a "livelier time." He explained "'klan' followed 'ku klux' as naturally as 'dumpty' follows 'humpty.'" "Origin of the Ku-Klux Klan," *NYT*, 9 June 1901, SM23.

1450 Edward L. Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984), 155-65.

1451 Fry, *Night Riders in Black Folk History*, 38-109. See for example

Andrew Waters, ed., *On Jordan's Stormy Banks: Personal Accounts of Slavery in Georgia* (Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 2000), 9, and 20-21:

> My sister was given away when she was a girl. She told me and Ma that they'd make her go out and lay on a table, and two or three white men would have in[t]ercourse with her before they'd let her get up. She was just a small girl. She died when she was still in her young days, still a girl.

Also ibid., 55, 150; E.A. Andrews, *Slavery and the Domestic Slave-Trade in the United States* (Boston, 1836), 101-2; Gerda Lerner, *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History* (1972; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 172-93.

1452 The torture of Blacks by police agencies still occurs today. See Associated Press, "Chicago Inquiry: Police Tortured Blacks," July 19, 2006, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/13936994/. According to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* the word "paddy" is from the Irish-English nickname for Patrick; it is also slang for Irishman. According to Thomas Sowell, "Over half the people arrested in New York in the 1850s were Irish…Police vans became known as 'Paddy wagons' because the prisoners in them were so often Irish." Nevertheless, in 1855 "nearly 40 percent of New York City's policemen were immigrants, and about three-fourths of these immigrants were Irish. By the late nineteenth century, the police forces and fire departments of all major American cities were controlled by Irish Americans." See Sowell's *Ethnic America: A History* (New York: HarperCollins, Basic Books, 1981), 26, 31. Even today, the ceremonies and funerals of the U.S. military and the American police forces include a Scotch-Irish bagpipe band, attesting to a role that was once the exclusive domain of the Irish. See a discussion in Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 106-8, 112-16.

1453 For more on the patrol system and laws, see Bell Irvin Wiley, *Southern Negroes, 1861-1865* (1938; reprint, New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1965), 32-41. If Jews appeared averse to this service (and none were known to have refused participation), they would be seen to have "flouted honor, obligation, and order; the trinity many antebellum Southerners believed upheld white supremacy," wrote Leah Elizabeth Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South, 1858-1905" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999), 57; Joel R. Williamson, *The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South since Emancipation* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984), 18-21; Joel Williamson, *After Slavery: The Negro in South Carolina During Reconstruction, 1861-1877* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1965), 264.

1454 See Archie P. McDonald, ed., *Hurrah for Texas! The Diary of Adolphus Sterne, 1838-1851* (Waco, TX: Texian Press, 1969), 51, 53, 56. Sterne notes the Jewish holiday Yom Kippur (pp. 50, 175) and records that he gave "the negro woman Susan…a sound beating which she well deserved" (p. 152). Sterne's diary is a casual walk through the world of slaveholding and Indian land theft, with

observations of the interactions among enslaved Africans, Jews, Freemasons, and Gentiles; and Blacks are mentioned throughout (pp. xi, 2, 4, 6, 34, 36, 42, 51, 53, 54 [execution of a Black man], 56, 58-59, 60-64, 71, 77, 86, 94, 101, 103, 105, 107, 108, 111, 112, 117, 125, 129, 142, 145, 151, 152 [runaway slave ads], 154, 155, 192, 194, 220, 226). Sterne's references to Indians include pp. 164, 212; and to his own slaveholding, pp. 58-59, 129, 142, 145, 152, 184, 205 (his wife's sale of a slave). There are references to Sterne's "patrolling" on pp. 51, 53 ("too free"), 54, 55, 56; and he acted as jailer and often captured and detained Blacks (pp. 56, 62, 103, 104, 105, 112, 126, 154).

1455 C. W. Tebeau, "Some Aspects of Planter–Freedman Relations, 1865-1880," *JNH* 21, no. 2 (Apr. 1936): 138-39, and 139 n. 18. For testimony of victims and witnesses see Waters, *On Jordan's Stormy Banks*, 195; Norman R. Yetman, ed., *Voices From Slavery* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970), 29, 38, 47, 65, 68, 75, 80-81, 96-97, 101, 110, 114-15, 129, 132, 147, 162, 191, 197, 220, 223, 231, 254, 289-90, 293, 303-4, 315, 318-19, 333, 335.

1456 David M. Oshinsky, *Worse Than Slavery: Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 26. Republicans, in this time, were the "party of Lincoln" and thus hated in the South.

1457 For a list of groups operating as affiliates, fronts, or sympathizers, see Michael Newton and Judy Ann Newton, eds., *The Ku Klux Klan: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 1991), xviii-xxvii. The better-known of these organizations were the White Brotherhood, the Men of Justice, the Constitutional Union Guards, the Regulators, the Jayhawkers, the Black Calvary, the Knights of the White Camellia and the many, many so-called rifle clubs throughout the United States. For rifle clubs "keeping blacks away from the polls," see Francis Butler Simkins, *Pitchfork Ben Tillman* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1964), 74-75; Charles Lane, *The Day Freedom Died: The Colfax Massacre, the Supreme Court, and the Betrayal of Reconstruction* (New York: Henry Holt, 2008), 243; Otis A. Singletary, *Negro Militia and Reconstruction* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1957), 139. For an example of Jewish participation in South Carolina's rifle clubs, see Charles W. Joyner, *Shared Traditions: Southern History and Folk Culture* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1999), 184. Heiman Kaminski "secured uniforms and rifles for the organization [Georgetown Rifle Guards]." Also, Selma S. Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt: The Jewish Community of Memphis, Tennessee, 1840s-1960s* (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1998), 35-36; ISJL, "Columbia, South Carolina"; ISJL, "Orangeburg, South Carolina."

1458 *Report of the Joint Select Committee*. President Ulysses S. Grant took direct action against the Klan under the Civil Rights Act of 1871 (also known as the Ku Klux Klan Act). This 1871 bill was in many ways identical to the one signed almost a century later by Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson.

1459 *United States v. Harris*, 106 U.S. 629 (1883).

The Jewish Relationship with the KKK

As whites, Jews were an accepted and important part of Southern society and thus were *never* targets of Nathan Bedford Forrest's original Ku Klux Klan. From early on Jews enjoyed a specific and unchallenged niche in the slave-based economy. In fact, Jews, like all true-blue Southern whites, understood and believed that without an organized, deliberate campaign of terroristic violence Blacks would quickly advance from downtrodden plantation laborer to independent commercial competitor, marketing their own labor and produce free from the management or agency of whites. The post-slavery rise of at least sixty all-Black towns attested to the Black desire for independence and self-development—centuries of slavery had not crushed this yearning.[1460] The phenomenal spate of Black inventors and innovators who sought patents and markets for their clever creations demonstrated a spirit of entrepreneurship that had survived one of the darkest eras in human history.[1461] It was this trend toward Black self-sufficiency that the Klan—with the unanimous blessing of white Southerners, Jew and Gentile—intended to prevent. All agreed that the Black man and woman *must* remain in the cotton fields doing exactly what they always had been forced to do.

At the same time, Jewish retail merchants, who since colonial times had faithfully served and profited from the slave-based cotton and sugar economies, were just as dependant on the trade of "free" Blacks after "emancipation." Black economic independence was indeed a threat to their own security and very survival. But because the Klan's agenda relegated Blacks to the status of permanent consumer class, the Jews "were able to pursue the

very profitable business of usuriously exploiting the rural Negro," as German economist Maximilian Weber succinctly put it.[1462]

So to find Jews sympathetic to and involved in Klan activities should not be the least bit surprising. Jews were able to establish themselves as merchants "with little difficulty," the Ku Klux Klan notwithstanding.[1463] New York University Jewish history professor Hasia Diner even admits that "In scattered instances Jews participated in mob action against blacks, shot blacks, or unfairly accused black people."[1464]

Many Jews in this time were openly espousing Klan-like beliefs. Jewish Confederate army veteran Eugene Henry Levy was described as a "cultured Southern Jew," who after the war went into banking and brokerage. He wrote bitterly of the Black emancipation: "The *extermination* of this race is a necessary consequence of this state of affairs."[1465] Jewish veteran Lewis Leon wrote of passing a brigade of Black Union soldiers and wishing that they had been among those Black soldiers massacred at Fort Pillow, Tennessee, a month earlier. For if they had been, wrote Leon, "they certainly would not curse us now."[1466]

1460 Norman L. Crockett, *The Black Towns* (Lawrence, KS: Regents Press of Kansas, 1979).

1461 For example, see the *African American Patent Holders Database*, by Cheryl Mason-Middleton, Black Studies Library, Ohio State University Libraries, Jan. 26, 2006, https://kb.osu.edu/dspace/bitstream/1811/5941/3/Black_Inventors.pdf; also, Ivan Van Sertima, ed., *Blacks in Science: Ancient and Modern* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983).

1462 Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1952), 353; Stephen J. Whitfield, "Jewish Fates, Altered States," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History,* eds. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 305; Clive Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers in the Age of Jim Crow," *SJH* 2 (1999): 58-59.

1463 Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Stein, *Bittersweet Encounter:*

The Afro-American and the American Jew (1970; reprint, New York: Schocken Books, 1972), 31.

1464 Hasia R. Diner, *In The Almost Promised Land: American Jews and Blacks, 1915-1935* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1995), 71. See the case of a Jewish merchant that involved the massacre of Blacks, reported in William C. Harris, *The Day of the Carpetbagger: Republican Reconstruction in Mississippi* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1979), 708-9.

1465 Emphasis ours. Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955), 20; Bertram W. Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865," *PAJHS* 50, no. 3 (March 1961): 194; Harry Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War* (New York: Arco, 1963), 253-54.

1466 Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War*, 217-18.

Jews in Klan History: In It From the Start

In a recent study, Robert N. Rosen compiled 517 pages of evidence of Jewish participation in the pro-slavery Confederate Army, profiling thousands of Jews willing to die to keep the Black man and woman enslaved in America. As a general during the Civil War, the Klan's original grand wizard, Nathan Bedford Forrest, had without hesitation enlisted Jewish soldiers in the Confederate Army. Isaac Felsenthal and his brother, A. Markewitz, and Samuel Hyams all fought for slavery directly under General Forrest, and Isaac Gleitzman even kept his kosher eating habits while he served.[1467] Harry Simonhoff wrote extensively on Jewish history and discussed the Ku Klux Klan in his book *Jewish Participants in the Civil War*:

> In Reconstruction days this secret organization aimed to restore white supremacy to the South. True to the *Southern tradition of religious tolerance*, its membership consisted of Christians *and Jews*.[1468]

According to Simonhoff, South Carolinian Dr. Simon Baruch was "[o]ne of the most renowned American Jewish figures" *and* "was a charter member of the Klan."[1469] Like a considerable number of Jewish immigrants, Baruch avoided enlistment in the Prussian army back in Europe only to eagerly enlist in the Confederate Army upon his arrival in America.[1470]

The Baruchs and their "black as coal" "mammy" Minerva lived in the town of Camden, where the patriarch, Simon, was president of the only Jewish organization in town, the Hebrew Benevolent

Association.[1471] His sons once rummaged through a trunk in their attic and found a white hood and a robe with a crimson cross—standard issue of the Ku Klux Klan. The clothing belonged to their father, in whose veins, wrote Simonhoff, "flowed nothing but Jewish blood." Upon discovering his secret, the young Bernard and his brother felt "extravagantly proud of their father."[1472] Baruch's biographer described the Klan's role when he was a member:

> In Kershaw County, of which Camden was the county seat, blacks outnumbered whites by two to one; this electoral imbalance the Klan sought to redress by harassing unpopular officials and frightening off black voters.[1473]

The Baruchs descended from a Sephardic Jewish slave-ship owner named Isaac Rodriquez Marques. "It is worth noting," Bernard Baruch later wrote without a trace of repentance,

> that whatever wealth came to Marques from the cruel traffic in slaves was paid for over and over again through the suffering and loss of life and fortune by his descendants both in the North and South during the Civil War.[1474]

His grandfather, Sailing Wolfe, enslaved twenty-six Black Africans, so that the family could boast that Bernard's mother, Isabelle, would "never to have to dress herself." The Civil War ruined the Baruchs in part because it released the African captives, leaving no house slaves to prevent the poor eighty-four-year-old Jewish slavemaster from tipping forward from his chair into the fireplace, where he burned to death.[1475]

Bernard Baruch kept so religiously to his ancestors' beliefs that his biographer found it "difficult to avoid labeling him a racist." He began acquiring large tracts of land on the South Carolina coast,[1476] and in his land deals he "always accepted the Southern tradition that the Negroes go with the land,"[1477] regardless of where "the Negroes" wanted to go.[1478] This Hebrew son of a Klansman once proposed a "United States of Africa" as a haven for Europe's Jewish refugees. In Baruch's mind the British would simply take over central Africa, including the Belgian Congo, Angola, Kenya, and what is now Tanzania, to develop a modern capitalist society.[1479]

According to Dr. Clive Webb, "Baruch's father was not the only Jew dedicated to the violent re-establishment of white supremacy."[1480] Isaac Hermann (1838–1917)

> was a leader in the movement to organize the [Civil War] veterans into an association whose primary aim, it would seem, was to protect the whites against the Negro freedmen....[H]e worked to restore white supremacy and to resist what he believed to be the encroachments of the Negroes.[1481]

Hermann believed that the Northerners who came to the South after the war were "vultures" who made the ex-slaves hate "their former owners and life long friends," in effect breaking up an "attachment…of the tenderest kind." Blacks who organized under the protection of these Northerners, he maintained, were the biggest threat to the South. Dixie was saved, however, when the Ku Klux Klan appeared "as an avalanche…and the country soon resumed its normal state."[1482]

Though many will certainly be shocked that white Jews have enjoyed a close association with the Ku Klux Klan, Jews once upon a time readily called public attention to the connection. In 1928, Jewish journalist Bernard Postal[1483] wrote an article for the *Jewish Tribune* titled JEWS IN THE KU KLUX KLAN, in which he insisted that Jews were an important part of the Klan legacy. The subtitle explicitly announced: KLAN-LIKE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE EXISTED SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION; JEWS PLAYED A PART IN ALL OF THEM.[1484] Postal, who was public relations director for B'nai B'rith, boasted that in "the development" of the KKK, Jews have had "a considerably more important hand than Jews know about or that the Ku Klux Klan and its kindred and affiliated societies are willing to acknowledge." He continued:

> Shortly after the Ku Klux Klan was founded, Bishop Richard H. Wilmer, an intimate friend of the Dragon of the Alabama realm, met Judah P. Benjamin, then an exile, in England. The former "brains of the Confederacy" was told of the plight of the South and about the hopes of the K.K.K. to rid the South of its incubus. Wilmer told him that the Knights needed horses and "dry-goods" (uniforms) in order to frighten the Negroes. Benjamin, trying to recoup his fortunes, was financially unable to aid, but *he borrowed money to supply the Ku Klux Klan with saddles and arms and dispatched Wilmer with the needed funds*.[1485]

Here, and with a measure of pride, a Jewish author and B'nai B'rith leader reveals that a white

Southern Gentile "emissary" was sent across the ocean to appeal to a prominent and respected Jewish American for the financing needed to establish the most notorious racial terrorist organization in American history—*and was successful*. Given Judah P. Benjamin's own history of having enslaved 140 Africans on his Louisiana sugar plantation, it is easy to see why the Klan's founding fathers had thought their trans-Atlantic trek would be fruitful. Benjamin wrote of the Southern Blacks that

> if external [read Northern] influences are brought to bear on the negro and influence his ignorant fancy with wild dreams of social and political equality, I shudder for the bitter future which is in store for my unhappy country.[1486]

But Benjamin is not the only Jewish Klan financier. Franklin I. Moses is an honored Jewish American statesman. In 1868, he was the first Jew to serve as chief justice of the Supreme Court in any American state. He was a true Jewish Confederate, who voted after the war to establish the Jim Crow laws in his state of South Carolina. And though he never became a known member of the secretive Ku Klux Klan, "he gave them considerable financial assistance."[1487]

Many Jews were in accord with the aims of the Klan. For example, David Meyer relocated from Atlanta to New York because he was disgusted at the idea of Black participation in politics. His family returned south in 1869, when he answered the call of the Georgia governor who wrote and asked him "to come back home. They needed him to fight Reconstruction and build Atlanta."[1488]

And this "fighting" often had deadly consequences. On April 13, 1873, as many as 280 Black people were murdered in Colfax, Louisiana, in a single incident. The "White League," a Klan offshoot intent on securing white rule in Louisiana, was "credited" with the massacre.[1489] Historian Eric Foner called it "the bloodiest single act of carnage in all of Reconstruction."[1490] Nonetheless, a boastful Rabbi Max Heller made the following claim in the 1922 "souvenir" publication of his own congregation: "[P]rominent Jews figured in the membership of the 'White League.'"[1491] Other Louisiana incidents were sparked in Coushatta, when the White League murdered six people, and in New Orleans, when thirty were killed and one hundred more wounded.[1492]

The Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life states that two prominent Wilmington, North Carolina, Jews—Sol Fishblate, mayor of the city, and Nathaniel Jacobi, a top businessman —"spoke to a growing mob and supported a declaration that whites should rule Wilmington and North Carolina."

> This meeting later resulted in the violent Wilmington Race Riot of 1898, in which white mobs terrorized the city's black population and forcibly installed Democratic Party rule.[1493]

And certainly there were many Jews who believed as did Frank Cohen, editor of the *Jewish Sentiment,* when he said, in perfect harmony with Klan doctrine:

> The white man will rule by fair means or by foul….God Almighty never created the negro the white man's equal and

> even an act of Congress will not change the trend of nature or swerve the white man from his determination to retain his supremacy.[1494]

Phillip Isenbaum of Mississippi signed an 1871 notice threatening a lynching death for the official who had recommended "a big Black Nigger" for a position of authority. Isenbaum identified himself as the "Grand Cyclops" of the Ku Klux Klan and warned those who would take issue with the Klan that they would "learn to stretch hemp"—a not so oblique reference to hanging—"beware, beware, beware, beware."[1495]

1467 Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 2000), 147-48; Eli N. Evans, *The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 63; Fedora Small Frank, "Nashville Jewry During the Civil War," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (fall 1980): 314; Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, 35; Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks: A Travel Guide and History*, vol. 2 (New York: Fleet Press, 1979), 56. More than 3,000 Jewish soldiers fought for the Confederacy.

1468 Emphasis ours. Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War*, 320-21.

1469 Ibid., 225.

1470 Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 35, 50; "Bernard Mannes Baruch: Financier, Philanthropist, and Presidential Advisor," *Jewish Historical Society of South Carolina* 9, no. 1 (winter 2004): 10.

1471 James Grant, *Bernard M. Baruch: The Adventures of a Wall Street Legend* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 18; Harry Golden, *Our Southern Landsman* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), 144; Carter Field, *Bernard Baruch: Park Bench Statesman* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1944), 5.

1472 Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War*, 225. See the discussion of, and justification for, Baruch's Klan membership, in Margaret L. Coit, *Mr. Baruch* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957), 1-32; Field, *Bernard Baruch*, 2; Grant, *Bernard M. Baruch,* 21; Clive Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations in the American South, 1790-1970" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Cambridge, 1997), 94.

1473 Grant, *Bernard M. Baruch*, 21. William L. White, *Bernard Baruch: Portrait of a Citizen* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950), 15, wrote that "their Jewish father, like most young Confederate veterans, had been a Knight of the Ku Klux Klan."

1474 "Bernard Mannes Baruch," 10. According to William L. White

(*Bernard Baruch*, 9): "It is just possible that Isaac Rodriquez Marques had been a pirate." Along with the Jewish slave-shippers, there were many Jewish pirates operating primarily in the Caribbean. The most notorious was the slave trader and slave breeder Jean Lafitte. See Nation of Islam, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 1991), 86-87. Also see Bernard M. Baruch, *My Own Story* (New York: Henry Holt, 1957), 15.

1475 Grant, *Bernard M. Baruch*, 16-17; Field, *Bernard Baruch*, 3-5.

1476 Jordan A. Schwarz, *The Speculator: Bernard M. Baruch in Washington, 1917-1965* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1981), 542; "Bernard Mannes Baruch," 11.

1477 Field, *Bernard Baruch*, 128. The concept that the slaves are included in the purchase of land stems from *The Babylonian Talmud*, pt. 4, *Nezikin*, vol. 1, *Baba Mezia* (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 335-36. See also Joseph ben Ephraim Karo, comp., *The Traditional Jewish Law of Sale: Shulhan Arukh, Hoshen Mishpat, Chapters 189-240,* trans. Stephen M. Passamaneck (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1983), 112; and Isaac Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949), 110.

1478 Bernard Baruch ultimately became a prominent Wall Street financier and international banker, a friend of presidents, and a Jewish-American icon. In 1932, Baruch loaned $25,000 to Josephus Daniels (profiled herein), the publisher of North Carolina's most prominent white supremacist newspaper. As an official in President Woodrow Wilson's administration, Daniels helped Wilson rid the government of its Black employees.

1479 *F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945,* vol. 2, ed. Elliott Roosevelt (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1950), 879-80; Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-1945* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1970), 102ff; Schwarz, *The Speculator*, 564.

1480 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 94-95; Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985*, vol. 3 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1993), 152, 772 n. 11. Texas Jew and Mason Adolphus Sterne was another. See Ruthe Winegarten and Cathy Schechter, *Deep in the Heart: The Lives and Legends of Texas Jews* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1990), 9.

1481 Jacob Rader Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews, 1775-1865,* vol. 3 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956), 236; Morris U. Schappes, ed., *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States, 1654-1875* (New York: Citadel Press, 1950), 495-98.

1482 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 94 n. 51; Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 185-86; Isaac Hermann, *Memoirs of a Veteran* (Atlanta, 1911), 232-240, 260-75.

1483 Postal was also public relations director for the National Jewish Welfare Board and author of several books on Jewish history. He was an editor and reporter for several Jewish periodicals, including the *New York Times* and the *Jewish Week,* and for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. He founded the *Jewish Digest* in 1955.

1484 Bernard Postal, "Jews in the Ku Klux Klan: Klan-Like Organizations Have Existed Since the Adoption of the Constitution;

Jews Played a Part in All of Them," *Jewish Tribune,* 14 Sept. 1928, 24, 60.

1485 Ibid. (Emphasis ours)

1486 Robert Douthat Meade, *Judah P. Benjamin: Confederate Statesman* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1943), 342. See Schappes, *Documentary History of the Jews*, 689 n. 17. Also, Susan Lawrence Davis, *Authentic History, Ku Klux Klan, 1865-1877* (New York: American Library Service, 1924), 45-47. Other notable scholars of Southern Jewry like Eli Evans have written whole books on the life of Judah P. Benjamin but exclude that extraordinary detail, writing only that he "gave to Southern causes." Eli N. Evans, *Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate* (New York: Free Press, 1988), 381. Also, see "An Interview with Eli N. Evans," *AJH* 78 (Sept. 1988): 242. According to Evans, "Benjamin, psychologically, remained a Jew all his life. And that is the key to explaining everything about him."

1487 Postal, "Jews in the Ku Klux Klan," 60.

1488 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 91. It seems ironic that this Jewish Confederate sympathizer would find relief from the dreaded Black political empowerment in this "Yankee" Northern metropolis, until it is remembered that New York City was so pro-slavery that its mayor Fernando Wood wanted to secede from the Union in solidarity with the South. Ernest A. McKay, *The Civil War and New York City* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1990), 13-14; David M. Ellis et al., *A Short History of New York State* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press in cooperation with the N. Y. State Historical Assoc., 1957), 238, 342.

1489 Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 437; Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863-1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1974), 268-70; Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America,* 684-85; *NYT,* 18 April 1873, 1; 19 April 1873, 3; 23 Sept. 1874, 2; American Experience, "The Colfax Massacre," PBS Online/WGBH, 2001, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/grant/peopleevents/e_colfax.html. The White League manifesto (1874) proclaimed that "there will be no security, no peace, and no prosperity for Louisiana until the…superiority of the Caucasian over the African in all affairs pertaining to government is acknowledged and established." See Lane, *The Day Freedom Died*, 217. A White League leaflet of 1874 explicitly made this point: "LOUISIANANS! TO SAVE YOUR COUNTRY DO NOT EMPLOY THE NEGRO (Wild beast can only be tamed by hunger)". See Dorothy Sterling, *The Trouble They Seen: Black People Tell the Story of Reconstruction* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1976), 436. For more on the White League, see "The Southern Terror," *NYT*, 2 Sept. 1874, 1; "Action of Governor Kellogg," *NYT*, 4 Sept. 1874, 1; and "The Policy in the South," *NYT*, 9 July 1877, 5, which states that Jewish congressman William M. Levy "appeared in full harmony with the Natchitoches White League." See especially "The Louisiana Reports," *NYT*, 24 Feb. 1875, 2; "The White League State," *NYT*, 23 Oct. 1880, 1; James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York: New Press, 1999), 210-19.

1490 Foner, *Reconstruction*, 530. As with the number of casualties claimed by racial atrocities in America, the actual body count is in dispute. In this case the lowest number of murder victims claimed is 100.

1491 Max Heller, comp., *Jubilee Souvenir of Temple Sinai, 1872-1922* (New Orleans: Congregation Temple Sinai, 1922), 39. The Ku Klux Klan is a general designation (or historical shorthand) for the many, many white American terrorist "organizations" that had common views, causes, and methods—all of them no less violent or racially repugnant.

1492 *NYT,* 2 Sept. 1874, 1; 4 Sept. 1874, 1; 10 Aug. 1877, 1; 5 Sept. 1874, 1; American Experience, "The Colfax Massacre." See also Philip Dray, *At the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Lynching of Black America* (New York: Random House, 2002), 48.

1493 ISJL, "Wilmington, North Carolina." Jacobi "organized business owners to threaten to fire their black employees" if the local pro-Black political party won the election.

1494 Eric L. Goldstein, "'Now Is the Time to Show Your True Colors': Southern Jews, Whiteness, and the Rise of Jim Crow," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History,* eds. Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 142.

1495 Sterling, *The Trouble They Seen*, 373. Isenbaum signed the notice along with four other subordinates.

The Klan & Jewish Masonry

The beauty and pride of Masonry is…its being free from the elements which have been ever the efficient causes of hatred, persecution, fraud, and rude barbarism.

—Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, father of American Reform Judaism

There is a common thread that runs through both Ku Klux Klan and Jewish histories. Klan members were commonly known to be active participants in Freemasonry, an enigmatic association of prominent white men with shared values and group loyalties that they are oath-bound to respect over all else. Members of this secret order bring their Masonic allegiances to their various roles in society, favoring fellow Masons in all affairs. The members meet secretly in communities across America and all over the world and hold positions of honor in every society. They are lawyers, judges, doctors, businessmen, politicians,

policemen, but the common unlearned white laborer is unwelcome in their assembly. The slave-owning president George Washington was a famous Freemason, as was the Klan's founder, Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest. The first "imperial wizards" of the revived twentieth-century Ku Klux Klan, William J. Simmons and Hiram W. Evans, were both Freemasons. Other Masonic luminaries with reputations for race hatred are Robert Byrd, Hoke Smith, Jesse Helms, and Strom Thurmond.[1496]

And many of the fundamental racial values of both groups were interchangeable.[1497] According to researcher Susan Lawrence Davis, General Forrest assembled the Klan for a meeting in 1867 at the Masonic Hall, where they "first donned their Masonic regalia and an hour later their Ku Klux Klan regalia."[1498] Scholar David M. Chalmers wrote that during the 1920s Klan resurgence, the Masons "were particularly rich hunting grounds" for Klan recruiters. Indeed, wrote another, "most of the leaders of the revived Ku Klux Klan" and "almost all [the Klan's] traveling organizers" were Masons. In Minneapolis "most of the Klansmen in the city were Masons," and in Milwaukee Klan advertisements openly stated that Masons were "preferred" for membership. In New York City, it was claimed by the Klan that 75 percent of its members were Masons.[1499] The Tyler, Texas, Masonic lodge required applicants to apply simultaneously for membership in the Klan.[1500] Klansmen in Waco were known to attend the funerals of Masons and perform the KKK ceremony immediately after the Masonic rites.[1501] This evidence demonstrates an intimate and lengthy relationship between Freemasonry and the Ku Klux Klan. And even though there were at times public disavowals of the connection, the very need to deny any association showed that the link was a generally held

perception.

At the very same time, Jews were a major force in Freemasonry. This fact has been attested to by the most decorated Jewish scholars and, most important, by the founder of Reform Judaism, the most important American Jew at the time the original Klan was born.[1502] Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise in 1855 was unequivocal about the Jewish role in Freemasonry:

> Masonry is a Jewish institution whose history, degrees, charges, passwords and explanations are Jewish from the beginning to the end…[1503]

According to the *Jewish Encyclopedia* the Jews figured deeply in Freemasonry. In fact, "it is probable that Jews were the first to introduce the movement into the country."

> The influence of the Jews in South Carolina [in the early 1800s] was shown by the fact that they were intimately connected with the introduction of freemasonry into the state, Emanuel de la Motta, who was educated at Charleston, being one of its leading exponents, while Abraham Alexander, who was honorary reader of the Beth Elohim congregation, was one of those who introduced the Scottish rite into America.[1504]

There was also the occasion in 1843 when twelve New York City Jewish retailers, "some of them members of the Masons or Odd fellows," organized the premier Jewish fraternal organization, B'nai B'rith ("Sons of the Covenant"), with its secret passwords, rituals, and insignia.[1505]

The "Judaeo-friendly"[1506] Masonic order was the domain of white society's elite and the bastion of power and white supremacy—and strictly Jim Crow. It was even said that Blacks may not enter or visit a white lodge or even discuss Masonic subjects with white men.[1507] In Alexandria, Virginia, "virtually every Jewish adult" that was a member of the synagogue was also a Mason, and this pattern was repeated in practically every American city.[1508] Aaron Lazarus owned thirteen Black human beings and, like several other Jewish residents of Wilmington, North Carolina, was an active Mason.[1509] For professional convenience, there was even at least one Masonic Temple with a slave-auction room.[1510]

Jewish Involvement in Freemasonry in the South

GRAND LODGE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
EXTRACT FROM MASONS

Charleston City Gazette & Commercial Daily Advertiser, December 23, 1812

HEBREW SYNAGOGUE.
The corner stone of a Hebrew Synagogue, was laid, with masonic honors, at Savannah, by the grand lodge of that state, on Wednesday the 19th inst.

Baltimore Patriot & Mercantile Advertiser, April 27, 1820

Grand Lodge of South-Carolina A. Y. M.

By order,
Harris G. Smith, Grand Sec'ty.

Charleston City Gazette & Commercial Daily Advertiser, May 1, 1810

Journalist Charles Wessolowsky (who in the late 1870s provided a travelogue on Jewish wealth in the South) was the Grand High Masonic Priest of Georgia; merchant and slave owner Adolphus Sterne was a Deputy Grand Master in Texas. Other Southern Jews had the Masonic emblem engraved on their tombstones.[1511] Slave dealer Jacob Levin was the acting rabbi and recognized leader of the Jews of Columbia, South Carolina. His wife was director of the Columbia Hebrew Sunday School. His non-Jewish neighbors held him in such high esteem that Levin was elected Illustrious Grand Master of the Masonic Council.[1512] Jewish cotton dealer Sam Wittkowsky co-founded the Charlotte, North Carolina, Masonic Lodge with his good friend

the notorious philo-Semite Zebulon Vance. Wittkowsky—crowned by a local newspaper as "the Building and Loan King of North Carolina"—became the first master of the lodge, which had several Jewish members.[1513]

Nashville, Tennessee, was an important stronghold of the original Klan, many of whose members were Masons. In 1871, the Jewish High Holiday Services were held at the Masonic Temple.[1514] When the Nashville Jews held a ceremony to lay the cornerstone of their new synagogue in 1901, "the service was conducted by the Masonic Cumberland Lodge."[1515] Atlanta Jews met at the Masonic lodge while their temple was being built, and at the temple dedication a procession of 97 Masons formed in front of the lodge and marched to the site of the synagogue, where "the Masonic Service followed." Forty members of B'nai B'rith participated. The rabbi, a 33rd-degree Mason who was on hand as Georgia's Grand Master, "examine[d] the stone masonically." It was "proved and consecrated."[1516] Jewish Grand Marshal Julian Spearman led the Masonic dedication services of Congregation Beth Israel in Gadsden, Alabama.[1517] The Masonic Directory of Memphis included both the Hebrew and the Masonic calendars.[1518] Sam Israel's picture hangs in the Masonic Lodge in West Blocton, Alabama, right across from a picture of Jesus Christ.[1519] And the Institute of Southern Jewish Life describes the case of a Jewish peddler named Joseph Lowenheim who was accosted by knife-wielding hooded men: after Lowenheim proved that he was a Mason, the gang set him free.[1520]

By 1923, the Ku Klux Klan boasted that nationwide 500,000 of its five million members were Masons,[1521] yet there is no history of

dissatisfaction among the many Jewish Masons who participated in Freemasonry at the highest levels. Indeed, one Jewish scholar could not have been clearer: "At the turn of the century, a Masonic lodge was of higher priority than a synagogue."[1522] In Atlanta, where the revived Klan's power reached its apex in the 1920s, Jews represented only one to two percent of the entire population, but they grew to be 35 percent of the Freemasons. A meeting at the Old Masonic Temple in June of 1914 explored the question "Shall the Negro Rule?"[1523] In Steven Hertzberg's words, "More than any other fraternal order, Freemasonry provided a hospitable and attractive haven for Atlanta's Jews."[1524] And Freemasonry—*with its heavy representation of Jews*—provided a hospitable and attractive haven for the Ku Klux Klan.

1496 William Joseph Whalen, *Christianity and American Freemasonry* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1958), 17.

1497 Ibid., 28.

1498 Davis, *Authentic History, Ku Klux Klan,* 312. See also ibid., 271-77, for the history of Albert Pike, the highest-ranking Scottish Rite Freemason, who "organized the Ku Klux Klan in Arkansas" and was appointed its Grand Dragon. On his deathbed he penned a final note that began with the Jewish greeting "Shalom" (ibid., 274).

1499 Whalen, *Christianity and American Freemasonry*, 6; David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The First Century of the Ku Klux Klan, 1865-1965* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 34, 149, 191, 254, 292-93; Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), 7; Stanley Frost, *The Challenge of the Klan* (1924; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 22. See also Marion Monteval, *The Klan Inside Out* (1924; reprint, Westport, CT: Negro Universities Press, 1970), 53-61; Rory McVeigh, "Structural Incentives for Conservative Mobilization: Power Devaluation and the Rise of the Ku Klux Klan, 1915-1925," *Social Forces* 77, no. 4 (June 1999): 1465; "Klan Membership Peddlers Tried to Connect Masonry and American Legion with Ku Kluxism to Gain Recruits," *Fort Wayne (Indiana) News Sentinel*, 23 Sept. 1921, 5.

1500 Hollace Ava Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas: Rabbis and Their Work* (College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 1999), 45.

1501 "Acts of Klan Solicitors Condemned by Masonic Grand Master in His Report," *Fort Worth (Texas) Star-Telegram,* 6 Dec. 1922, 17.

1502 For Jews in freemasonry see Hasia R. Diner, *A Time for*

Gathering: The Second Migration, 1820-1880 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992), 160-62; Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 1 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1989), 571-73 and passim; and Marilyn Kay Cheatham Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric: Nineteenth-Century Jewish Merchants Living Texas Reality and Myth" (Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M Univ., 2003), chap. 5, which focuses on the "extensive involvement of Jewish men in fraternal organizations such as Odd Fellows and Freemasons." Goldman writes (p. 6), "Not only did Jews join these organizations, but in several instances they were instrumental in bringing these organizations to Texas."

1503 Norman H. Finkelstein, *American Jewish History* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2007), 63.

1504 "South Carolina," *JEncy*, 11:481. "In 1793 the cornerstone ceremony for the new synagogue in Charleston, South Carolina, was conducted according to the rites of Freemasonry." See "Freemasons," *Encyclopædia Judaica*, 7:124. Also, Kenneth Libo and Irving Howe, *We Lived There Too* (New York: St. Martins, 1984), 61.

1505 Rowena Olegario, "'That Mysterious People': Jewish Merchants, Transparency, and Community in Mid-Nineteenth Century America," *Business History Review* 73, no. 2 (summer 1999): 186; Diner, *A Time for Gathering*, 162; Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, 27. See also Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1978), 168-69; Mark I. Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity in Nineteenth-Century America: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830-1880" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Florida, 1997), 226.

1506 Greenberg, "Creating Ethnic, Class, and Southern Identity," 240.

1507 Whalen, *Christianity and American Freemasonry*, 16, 29, 135. For claims of racial equality in freemasonry, see *A Treasury of Masonic Thought,* ed. Carl Glick (New York: Crowell, 1953), 157-59.

1508 Max Rosenberg, ed., *Temple Beth El: A Centennial History of Beth El Hebrew Congregation* (Alexandria, 1962), 13. Jewish Masonic involvement is mentioned in Herbert T. Ezekiel and Gaston Lichtenstein, *The History of the Jews of Richmond, from 1769 to 1917* (Richmond, VA: H.T. Ezekiel, 1917), 83; Benjamin Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger: A Study of Jewish Life in the Small Community* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), 85, 116, 153; Mark H. Elovitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie: The Birmingham Experience* (University, AL: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1974), 11, 12, 39-40, 71; Gerald L. Gold, "A Tale of Two Communities," in *The Jews of North America,* ed. Moses Rischin (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1987), 228; Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s-1990s* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994), 8, 29, 46, 97, 167, 211, 268 and passim; Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010), 27, 43, 113, 142; Louis Ginsberg, *History of the Jews of Petersburg, 1789-1950* (Petersburg, Va., 1954), 8, 33, 40; Roland Flade, *The Lehmans: From Rimpar to the New World,*

A Family History (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1996), 58; Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks,* 2:31, 61, 63, 69, 115, 122, 129, 191, 230, 258, 294; Bertram Wallace Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 172, 301 n. 54; Anny Bloch, "Mercy on Rude Streams: Jewish Emigrants from Alsace-Lorraine to the Lower Mississippi Region and the Concept of Fidelity," *SJH* 2 (1999): 98; Marcie Cohen Ferris, "Dining in the Dixie Diaspora: A Meeting of Region and Religion," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 269; Wendy Machlovitz, *Clara Lowenburg Moses: Memoir of a Southern Jewish Woman* (Jackson, MS: Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, 2000), 7; Hermann, *Memoirs of a Veteran*, 265; McDonald, *Hurrah for Texas!* xi, 37, 38, 48, 72, 77, 102, 115 n. 2, 157, 162, 194, 219, 220, 225-27, 239; Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, 27, 50, 53; Solomon Breibart, *Explorations in Charleston's Jewish History* (Charleston: History Press, 2005), 69, 72, 107; Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 20, 26, 49; Canter Brown, Jr., "Philip and Morris Dzialynski: Jewish Contributions to the Rebuilding of the South," *AJA* 44 (1992): 525, 529, 530; Wendy Lowe Besmann, *A Separate Circle: Jewish Life in Knoxville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2001), 25, 40; David Max Eichhorn, *Jewish Folklore in America* (Middle Village, NY: J. David Publishers, 1996), 72, 75; Simonhoff, *Jewish Participants in the Civil War*, 274, 275, 280; Robert Gordis, "Mordecai Manuel Noah: A Centenary Evaluation," *PAJHS* 41, no. 1 (Sept. 1951): 13; Jason Schulman and David Rosen, "Writing the Jewish History of New Iberia, Louisiana," *Circa* 16, no. 2 (fall 2007): 8; Helen Kohn Hennig, *The Tree of Life: Fifty Years of Congregational Life at the Tree of Life Synagogue, Columbia, S.C.* (Columbia: Tree of Life Congregation, 1945), 4; Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 1:442; Jacob Rader Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985,* vol. 2 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1991), 71, 83, 90-91, 119, 138, 144, 146, 147, 154, 163, 175, 177, 211, 239, 240, 245, 275; Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew, 1492-1776,* vol. 3 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1970), 1168-72; John McKay Sheftall, "The Sheftalls of Savannah: Colonial Leaders and Founding Fathers of Georgia Judaism," in *Jews of the South: Selected Essays from the Southern Jewish Historical Society*, eds. Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier (Macon, GA: Mercer Univ. Press, 1984), 69-70; Iuliu Herscovici, *The Jews of Vicksburg, Mississippi* (Xlibris, 2007), 84, 86, 89, 150, 151; William M. Kramer, "Henry J. Labatt (1832-1900): Pioneer Lawyer of California and Texas," *Western States Jewish History* 28, no. 3 (1996): 155-56; *Circa* 17, no. 3 (fall 2008): 12; *American Jewish Yearbook,* vol. 6 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1904-1905), 56, 63, 65, 74, 87, 100, 114, 116, 118, 138, 151, 188, 190, 208; Martin I. Hinchin, *Fourscore and Eleven: A History of the Jews of Rapides Parish, 1828-1919* (Alexandria, LA: M.I. Hinchin, 1984), passim; Joyner, *Shared Traditions*, 180; Elliott Ashkenazi, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana, 1840-1875* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1988), 75; Tony Fels, "Religious Assimilation in a Fraternal Organization: Jews and Freemasonry in Gilded-Age San Francisco," *AJH* 74, no. 4 (June 1985). References to Jewish involvement with Masonic orders are in

articles at ISJL Digital Archive, Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, 2006, http://www.isjl.org. See **South Carolina**: Aiken, Beaufort, Bishopville, Camden, Charleston, Columbia, Darlington, Dillon, Georgetown, Orangeburg, Sumter; **Alabama**: Decatur, Dothan, Eufaula, Florence, Gadsden, Huntsville, Montgomery, Selma, West Blocton; **Georgia**: Albany, Atlanta, Augusta, Columbus, Dalton, Fitzgerald, Macon, Rome, Savannah; **Louisiana**: Crowley, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Natchitoches, New Iberia, Opelousas; **Mississippi**: Clarksdale, Holly Springs, Jackson, Natchez, Osyka, Summit, Tupelo; **North Carolina**: Charlotte, Durham, Gastonia, Hendersonville, Jacksonville, New Bern, Rocky Mount, Wilmington, Winston-Salem; **Tennessee**: Clarksville, Columbia, Nashville.

1509 ISJL, "Wilmington, North Carolina."

1510 John S. Kendall, "Shadow Over the City," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 22 (Jan.–Oct. 1939): 153.

1511 Hagedorn, "Jews and the American South," 105-6; McDonald, *Hurrah for Texas!* xi, 115 n. 2.

1512 Korn, "Jews and Negro Slavery," 169-70, 185 (Levin's slave advertisement).

1513 ISJL, "Charlotte, North Carolina"; Rogoff, *Down Home*, 113.

1514 In fact, synagogue services in the South were often held at Masonic Halls, as in the towns of Beaufort, Bishopville, Darlington, and Dillon, South Carolina; Eudora, Arkansas; Birmingham, Decatur, Florence, and Huntsville, Alabama; Clarksville, Columbia, Nashville, and Union City, Tennessee; Albany, Atlanta, Fitzgerald, and Rome, Georgia; Crowley, Lake Charles, Natchitoches, New Iberia, and Opelousas, Louisiana, to name a few.

1515 See Samuel Oppenheim, "The Jews and Masonry in the United States Before 1810," *PAJHS* 19 (1910). Albert M. Friedenberg, "A List of Jews Who Were Grand Masters of Masons in Various States of This Country," *PAJHS* 19 (1910): 95-100, lists 24 Jewish "Grand Masters," including those from the Southern Jim Crow states of Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Virginia, and Texas. See Fedora Small Frank, *Beginnings on Market Street: Nashville and Her Jewry, 1861-1901* (Nashville, 1976), 7, 13, 99; and Rosalind Benjet, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Community of Dallas, 1921-1923," *SJH* 6 (2003): 136, 139, 159. The *Atlanta Constitution* ("In the Jewish World," 27 Jan. 1901, A6) identified several Southern Jewish grand masters, including Max Meyerhardt, Edward Marks, and Leon L. Schwartz.

1516 David Marx, *A History of the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation of Atlanta, Georgia* (Atlanta: Hebrew Benevolent Congregation, 1917), 16; Janice O. Rothschild, *As But a Day: The First Hundred Years, 1867-1967* (Atlanta: Hebrew Benevolent Congregation, 1966), 10, 50.

1517 ISJL, "Gadsden, Alabama."

1518 Lewis, *A Biblical People in the Bible Belt*, 50.

1519 ISJL, "West Blocton, Alabama."

1520 ISJL, "Nashville, Tennessee."

1521 MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, 8, 10.

1522 Gold, "A Tale of Two Communities," 228.

1523 *Jeffersonian*, 23 July 1914, 10.

1524 Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*, 168-69.

The KKK's Attacks on Whites and Jews

There were instances of Klan violence against whites for various perceived infidelities to white interests, including a few cases of violence against individual Jews. But there is no evidence that the victim's Jewishness motivated the attacks. For instance, among the victims was a Russian Jewish immigrant, S.A. Bierfield, who had set up a dry goods store in Franklin, Tennessee, after the Civil War and "commanded quite a trade" among Blacks. On August 15, 1868, Bierfield, his Black clerk Lawrence Bowman, and another Black man, Henry Morton, were attacked in Bierfield's store by the Ku Klux Klan. Bierfield and Bowman were lynched, while Morton somehow escaped to inform federal authorities. Consequently, Bierfield is considered to be the first Jew lynched in the United States, though Bierfield's Jewish neighbors at the time "asserted that Bierf[i]eld's murder had more to do with his radical Republican politics than his religion."[1525] Dr. Clive Webb concurs, writing that there was "no evidence to suggest" that Bierfield's Jewishness was an issue. It was his "fraternizing with freedmen," and *not religion*, "that aroused the ire of Klansmen."[1526]

Similarly, the Klan was said to have been behind attacks on Jewish Floridians Samuel Fleishman in 1869 and M.H. Lucy in 1871. Like Bierfield, both were merchants, a fact which suggests that personal grudges or simple robbery may have motivated these attacks.[1527] Their engagement in Black trade is suggested by some as a cause, but, as has been shown, this Black–Jewish economic relationship was commonplace and fully accepted throughout the South. The merchants' avowed associations with Republicanism, the party

of Lincoln, and the hated northern occupiers certainly could have inspired Klan murder, but their *Jewishness* was probably not a factor. Most Southern Jews were as staunchly Confederate and Democrat as their Gentile fellow citizens, but they preferred Republican *business policies* that tied the North and South together economically—a distinct advantage for Southern retailers who were supplied with financing and merchandise from their Northern-based connections. Diehard "Lost Cause" Confederates violently opposed reconciliation with the North and routinely murdered their enemies—without respect to their faith or creed—and this most likely motivated the Klan's isolated and extremely rare attacks on whites *who happened to be* Jewish.

Other white-on-white violence was reported in the "whitecapping" era of the 1890s, when whites organized to rid themselves of the oppressive crop-lien mortgage system that had bankrupted many farmers, Black and white. Rural merchants were implicated as profiteers in these mortgage schemes and many had become wealthy landholders at the expense of debt-burdened farmers. In these cases, some Jews were targeted for their allegedly fraudulent business dealings—not for the religion they professed.

Further weighing against "Jewishness" as a motive, no synagogues or Jewish community institutions were ever threatened amidst the Klan and whitecap violence, and Jews were known to have "friendships" with the vigilantes.[1528] New Orleans rabbi Max Heller went out of his way, in the face of the Klan violence, to extol the "perfect harmony prevailing between Jew and Gentile."[1529] Other scholars concur, adding that "on the rare occasions when Jews received physical

'punishment,' they received…the lighter, white variety."[1530]

1525 ISJL, "Nashville, Tennessee."

1526 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 92-93. See also Newton and Newton, *The Ku Klux Klan,* 21; Patrick Q. Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," *SJH* 8 (2005): 78-79; Marshall Field Stevenson, "Points of Departure, Acts of Resolve: Black-Jewish Relations in Detroit, 1937-1962" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Michigan, 1988), 31 n. 1; Schappes, *Documentary History of the Jews,* 515-17. Schappes, without offering any proof, suggests that the attack was anti-Semitic. See Morris U. Schappes and Oscar R. Williams, "Historical Impressions of Black-Jewish Relations prior to World War II: Another Comment and Response," in *Strangers and Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks and Jews in the United States*, eds. Maurianne Adams and John Bracey (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 46; Frank, "Nashville Jewry During the Civil War," 322; Scott Marler, "Merchants in the Transition to a New South: Central Louisiana, 1840-1880," *Louisiana History* 42, no. 2 (spring 2001): 186-87. See the report of an 1887 incident in Louisiana by B'nai B'rith official G.A. Levi. He refers to an attack on two Jewish merchants' store and surrounding fence. He attributes the acts to "[b]usiness jealousy, coupled probably with some of that anti-Semitic feeling." "Ku Klux Outrages in Louisiana," *Menorah* 2 (1887). Levi points out that "The State's Attorney is preparing a vigorous campaign, and a large number of arrests will soon be made." See also Leonard Dinnerstein, *Uneasy at Home: Antisemitism and the American Jewish Experience* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1987), 87-89. See also *American Israelite,* 21 April 1876.

1527 Other reported crimes against Jewish merchants give no indication that religion was a factor. See for example *AC,* 12 July 1892, 3, and 11 March 1902, 4. And when a Jew was accused of stealing from a Gentile, there was no suggestion that the Jew was motivated by anti-Gentile racism. See *AC,* 19 April 1901, 7.

1528 Besmann, *A Separate Circle*, 32.

1529 Bobbie Malone, *Rabbi Max Heller: Reformer, Zionist, Southerner, 1860-1929* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1997), 48.

1530 Bryan Edward Stone, "West of Center: Jews on the Real and Imagined Frontiers of Texas" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Texas at Austin, 2003), 244. A rabbi in Muskogee, Oklahoma, Joseph Klein, also used the terms "comparatively light" to describe Klan violence against Jews in his town. See Lee Shai Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-Town America: A History* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2005), 273.

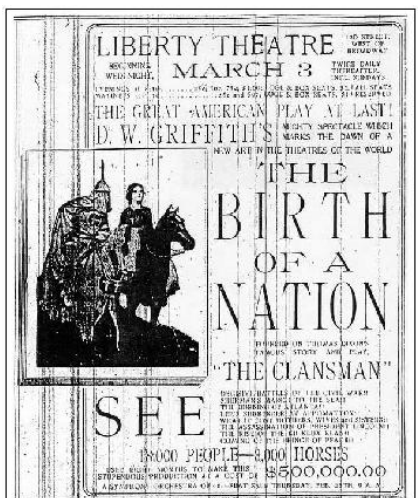
The "New" Ku Klux Klan & the Jews

The manufacturers
of the ubiquitous
Klan night-gown
have frequently been
Jews.

—
Bernard
Postal,
B'nai
B'rith
leader

The original Ku Klux Klan of General Forrest's design ceased to exist as an organization in the late 1800s once its principles became an essential part of the Southern establishment and culture. It was revived as a direct result of the release of D.W. Griffith's silent movie epic *Birth of a Nation* in 1915. The movie adaptation of the Rev. Thomas Dixon's book titled *The Clansman* was America's first movie blockbuster, and it effectively presented the Ku Klux Klan's racial philosophy as righteous, inspirational, and as American as apple pie. Using revolutionary techniques in cinematography, the film captivated the white American imagination and transformed the Klan's trail of hate crimes into a heroic heritage, all sold—in one viewing—to a massive international audience. Adolf Hitler would have marveled at its deadly efficiency at broadcasting the most vile racial propaganda, which became instantaneously central to the white American national identity and creed. Jewish investors, untroubled by the film's

toxic message and intoxicated by its moneymaking potential, financed its production; they also greatly enhanced its distribution worldwide. The greatest of the Hollywood movie studios, Metro Goldwyn Mayer (MGM), was started by Jewish mogul Louis B. Mayer with the profits he earned from distributing the film.[1531]



Advertisement for Ku Klux Klan recruitment film *Birth of a Nation* at the Jewish-owned Liberty Theater in New York.

The sheer power of this provocative new form of race propaganda had immeasurable consequences. An Atlanta white man named William J. Simmons was so affected by *Birth of a Nation* that he revived the dormant relics of the Ku Klux Klan using the film as advertisement. *Birth of a Nation* sowed the seeds of race hatred, and with the return of World War I veterans, Klan membership—North and South—mushroomed to an estimated five million.[1532]

1531 Neal Gabler, *An Empire of Their Own* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1988), 90; Bosley Crowther, *Hollywood Rajah: The Life and Times of Louis B. Mayer* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960), 48-49; Charles Higham, *Merchant of Dreams: Louis B. Mayer, MGM and the Secret Hollywood* (New York: Donald I. Fine, 1993), 27. The

Pittsburgh Jewish Criterion extolled the "great" film in its October 1, 1915 edition, p. 18.

1532 Lawrence J. Oliver, "Writing from the Right during the 'Red Decade': Thomas Dixon's Attack on W. E. B. Du Bois and James Weldon Johnson in *The Flaming Sword*," *American Literature* 70, no. 1 (March 1998): 141; Charles C. Alexander, *The Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest* (Lexington: Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1966), 18; Sara Bullard, ed., *The Ku Klux Klan: A History of Racism and Violence* (Montgomery: Southern Poverty Law Center, 1991), 19; Monteval, *The Klan Inside Out*, 11.

Institutionalizing Race Hate

This was certainly an ominous set of events for Blacks, who fought both the movie and the Klan. But was this Klan revival as troublesome for Jews? The success of the Klan was its ability to *institutionalize* its racial philosophy within the American system of government and to weave itself into the fabric of American society, thereby unseating the Constitution and its guaranteed rights to all American citizens. Proof of this is in the 1922 speech by Georgia representative William C. Lankford from the floor of the United States Congress—a half century after the original Klan's "disbanding":

> I truly believe in the supremacy of the white race. I believe the white race gave us the greatest possible form of government. No other race could have added to it. This government of the white man was not helped when the negro began voting. He will not make it better in the future….I believe "that when this planet was created the Almighty personally turned it over to the whites."[1533]

Were these words uttered by Adolf Hitler or his cohorts—*even written in a private correspondence*—they would ring ignominiously from every history book for all to see and condemn. But they are barely a footnote in the history of America despite being proclaimed from the loftiest podium in the most august American institution. Representative Lankford received a hearty ovation for his remarks and was asked to repeat them at another session. No outrage, condemnation, or even mild rebuke

was recorded, and the dozen Jewish members of Congress apparently made no mention of the hate-filled address.[1534] In the North, the hallowed Harvard University, which boasts of having graduated eight presidents and forty Nobel laureates, also boasted its own Ku Klux Klan chapter.[1535]

Far from being a rogue organization of disaffected outsiders, the Klan was an essential part of the American system of governance, a quasi-official body of enforcers for the white elite—as much a part of the government as the Department of Defense or the Supreme Court. As Congressman Lankford's language eloquently shows, the Ku Klux Klan and its beliefs had become indistinguishable from those of the United States government. All other cherished American institutions fell in line arraying against Black progress. Klansmen enjoyed the respect of their white brethren and felt they had "immunity from punishment or even investigation." Government officials—including judges, attorneys, justices of the peace, constables, police commissioners, chiefs of police, policemen, and mayors—newspaper editors, and reporters were among the Klan's membership.

Perhaps not a more potent governmental endorsement exists than the event that occurred in August of 1925, when 40,000 hooded and robed Klansmen paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., in the "greatest public demonstration in the history of the Klan." The government issued permits and a special detail of "blue-jacketed, white trousered marines, who in unspoken tribute to the leaders of the Klan, guarded the Treasury Department." Trains were chartered, hotels were booked, and Klan ceremonies and other activities were planned, demonstrating that all

sectors of society in the United States capital were in full accord with the racial terrorists.[1536]

The Klan held very public ceremonies and events that were participated in or enabled by the government and the press. Indeed, the Klan held an initiation ceremony in the U.S. Capitol, and it opened a lobbying headquarters at 1723 Rhode Island Ave., NW. Southern towns held "Klan Days," during which Klansmen rode in full regalia, culminating in massive cross burnings. When Klansmen first marched in Houston in 1921, authorities blacked out the city lighting system to heighten the drama of the Klan parade, and policemen kept the streets clear for the marchers.[1537]

1533 See *Congressional Record*, 67th Cong., 2d sess., 18 Jan. 1922, House 1368. This is just part of Lankford's lengthy proclamation from the House floor (*Cong. Rec.*, 67th Cong., 2d sess., 1922, H1367-H1371), in which he asserted, in addition to many other remarkable insights, that God Himself is a white man.

1534 Jewish members of Congress at the time of Lankford's statements were Julius Kahn (profiled herein), Henry Mayer Goldfogle, Adolph Joachim Sabath, Isaac Bacharach, Meyer London, Isaac Siegel, Milton Kraus, Lester David Volk, Nathan David Perlman, Martin Charles Ansorge, Albert Berger Rossdale, and Benjamin Rosenbloom, most of them from New York.

1535 "Ku Klux Klan at Harvard Awaits Moment to Strike," *Harvard Crimson*, 22 Oct. 1923, 1, 6; Lauren E. Baer, "The Ku Klux Klan at Harvard," *Harvard Crimson Online Edition*, http://www.thecrimson.com/article.aspx?ref=97787.

1536 Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915-1930* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967), 179-80; Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism,* 286-88. Far from protesting the event, the *B'nai B'rith Magazine* started in that year to mock Blacks with crude racial stereotypes and "negro dialect," even referring to them as "darkies." See Hasia R. Diner, *In the Almost Promised Land: American Jews and Blacks, 1915-1935* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1977), 93.

1537 Jackson, *Ku Klux Klan in the City,* 42, 179; Stone, "West of Center," 223; Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism,* 39-40; MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, 10-11.

The Jews of Klan Kountry

No man who loves the memory of the Confederacy is going to join a crowd that would bar out Judah P. Benjamin….No, sir!

—

Stanley Frost, *The Challenge of the Klan*

Jews all around America had settled comfortably in their communities, including the very places where the Ku Klux Klan was strongest. On October 24, 1923, Klansmen chartered trains to "Klan Day at the Texas State Fair," where brass bands greeted them and where rodeo riders performed in Klan robes and hoods for 25,000 spectators. The *Dallas Morning News* described it as a "pageant" that "proved to be the most colorful and unique event…in the city of Dallas." Among those on the platform with the Klan leaders was the wealthiest and most respected Jewish businessman in the state of Texas, retail mogul Alex Sanger.[1538]

Historian Carolyn Gray LeMaster found the Klan in Arkansas living in harmony with the Jewish communities. This, at a time when Arkansas "became one of the group's strongest bastions." For

example, a Jewish dry-goods merchant in Jonesboro "was selling sheets to be used by the Klan." A Little Rock Jewish attorney, Henry Spitzberg, openly supported a Ku Klux Klan member for the position of prosecuting attorney at a time when most of the prosecutions under Jim Crow law disproportionately targeted Black men and boys. Jewish mayoral candidate Dan Daniels won the endorsement of the Ku Klux Klan in Hot Springs, along with the support of Spitzberg and another prominent Jew, Harry B. Solmson, Sr. In the town of Manila, "almost every man" was a member of the Klan, "but the Jews were not taunted or harassed." The Grand Dragon of Arkansas lived in McGehee, yet the local Jews faced "no real problems." Jewish resident Harold Hart was "so well accepted" in the town of Eudora that he was even invited to join the Klan, and Leo Berg (1868–1931) served as Camden's mayor "[a]t the height of the Klan days..."[1539]

The State [Columbia, S.C.] May 7, 1903. *Idaho Daily Statesman*, May 4, 1919. *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*, June 17, 1920.

According to scholars, business owners showed their ideological solidarity with the Ku Klux Klan by choosing three names, each beginning with the letter *K*. Those Jewish businesses fit that practice, though their actual motives are unknown.

"Many" Texas Jews supported the KKK, according to Jewish historian Bryan Edward Stone, and helped it "during its meteoric rise to political power." They "had little reason to fear [the Klan],"[1540] he writes, and "*there was little reason for Jews to oppose them*." "Whatever their rhetoric," he stresses, "the Klan simply did not justify a sense of emergency to most Jewish Texans." The Klan was mainstream enough in Fort Worth, Texas, to sponsor a city baseball team. A Jewish storeowner in that city reportedly paid the Klan initiation fees for his employees, and another added the name of a Klan member to his company's letterhead just to publicly show his loyalty and support.[1541]

Jews became "a vital part of the local society

and economy" in Forrest City, Arkansas, the town named after the Klan's founder, Nathan Bedford Forrest.[1542] The June 4, 1922, edition of Portland's *Morning Oregonian* announced that the governor would attend a "Ku Klux Klan Karnival Kinks parade" on July 3. On the very same page as the announcement was an advertisement—the largest—by Samuel Rosenblatt & Co. Aronson jewelers also advertised.

At least one Jewish business in Indianapolis changed its name, not to conceal itself from Klan terror—but to reflect the owner's ideological solidarity with the racial terrorists, becoming Kaufman's Kampus Klothes. In Columbia, South Carolina, there was Kohn's Korrect Klothes and in Boise, Idaho, Kirshbaum's Klever Klothes. A Jewish writer examined this KKK–Jewish intimacy in a 1925 article appearing in the NAACP's *Crisis* magazine. The Jewish retailer and businessman, he wrote, was "satisfied to accept the [racial] situation as he finds it" and will "go along with the Klan's dictum that black and white must be forever separate."[1543]

Fort Worth's Rabbi G. George Fox was both admired and respected in his white community. He belonged to the Elks and the Rotary clubs, along with people he knew to be Klansmen. Before he left the city in 1923, the Chamber of Commerce arranged a farewell luncheon, *the head of the local Ku Klux Klan presiding.*[1544] The rabbi had many Klan acquaintances and treated the terrorists "as the friends and associates they were," wrote Dr. Stone.[1545] The president of the Dallas Jewish Historical Society maintained that "Klan members in Dallas usually harbored no specific prejudice against Jews." She found that when a Jew was whipped in a "klan-like" attack in 1922, the local

KKK offered a $500 reward to find the perpetrators.[1546]

The one time that Rabbi Fox did "speak out" against the Klan, his "rebuke" sounded more like an endorsement. In the *Jewish Monitor*, which he edited, Fox defended his white-hooded comrades against charges of anti-Semitism: "The alleged prejudice against Jews in these organizations is exaggerated," he wrote. He warmly reassured "those who might feel that my words are directed against them, that among these false prophets [the Ku Klux Klan] are also *some of my best friends*." He sought "dialogue, rather than denunciations," writes author Hollace Ava Weiner, who asserts on the rabbi's behalf that "The Klan was not all bad." Consequently, when Gentiles stood up and formed an anti-Klan movement in 1922, it did not include the rabbi in its ranks.[1547]

Bernard Postal and Lionel Koppman agree that "Examples abound of Texas Jews enjoying cordial, even friendly relationships with Klan members." "Uncle" Joe Nussbaum was the "beloved patriarch" of the town of Mexia. So respected was he that the Klan would "often" ask him—*a Jew*—to settle disputes before they resorted to legal action.[1548] When Klansmen first marched in Houston in 1921, they were "ghostly garbed by a local Jewish-owned overall factory for $1.50 per."[1549] John Rosenfield, a Jewish reporter for the *Dallas Morning News* who later became one of the city's most influential cultural figures, "began his career covering Klan picnics for the paper." Texas Jew Fred Florence, one of Dallas's leading bankers, was a longtime friend of Zeke Marvin, the Grand Dragon of the Texas Klan.[1550]

At the height of Klan power, Beaumont, Texas, rabbi Samuel Rosinger proceeded with plans to

construct a $110,000 synagogue. The building, "with seating for six hundred, had as its centerpiece a copper-domed sanctuary with sparkling stained-glass windows." Certainly, such construction would have been unthinkable if an atmosphere of terroristic anti-Semitism had dominated Jewish life.[1551]

According to Stone, the Klan actually made "gestures of good will" toward its Jewish fellow citizens in the 1920s.[1552] Dallas Klansmen visited Edward Titche, the head of the Titche-Goettinger department store, to invite him to join them. When Titche informed the Klan "emissaries" that he was Jewish (the Klan limited its membership in some locales to white believers in Christianity), they "regretfully admitted that it was too bad, because Titche would have made a great Grand Kleagle."[1553]

Throughout the 1920s, the *Texas Jewish Herald*, the only Jewish newspaper in the state, carried no reports of Klan attacks, intimidation, or even criticism against Jews.[1554] Charles C. Alexander, author of *The Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest*, wrote, "There is little evidence of overt antipathy on the part of the Klan toward Jews in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, or Oklahoma."[1555] Historian Ruth Scheinberg reports that the Silverman family

> could sit on their front porch and see a huge Ku Klux Klan cross erected on Blue Mountain, burning fiercely on designated nights. It was frightening to the children, but the father assured the family as long as they were respected people in the community, they did not have anything to be concerned about.[1556]

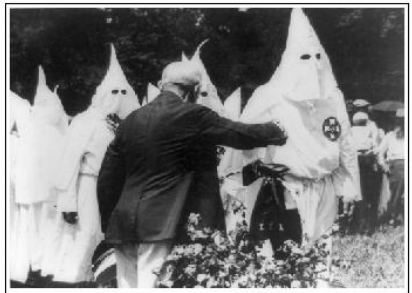
Louis Silverman was nominated for membership

in the Klan, reassured that "niggers and Catholics are what the KKK was against," and not Jews. Another Jew named Benny Grusin was invited by Klan members to go to Jasper, Alabama, for a KKK parade and a membership offer.[1557]

Sol Lipman, a Jewish clothier of New Bern, North Carolina, was approached by one of his customers (who was fully aware of Lipman's Jewishness) and invited to join the Ku Klux Klan. When one prominent Southern Jewish politician was asked about "brushes" he may have had with the Klan, he responded *approvingly* that "some of my best friends joined it," and further likened such membership to joining the Masons.[1558]

The Klan's leader in Colorado was an open and public supporter of the Jewish community. He had fought for the election of a Jew as Exalted Ruler of the Elks, and he reassured the Jews that "Our fight is not against your people." In 1924, the B'nai B'rith felt cozy enough with the Klan to invite them to one of its meetings. The state's governor was a Klan member *and* an enthusiastic supporter of a Jewish charity, and a Jewish lawyer handled legal issues for the Ku Klux Klan.[1559]

In 1924, Fairfield, Illinois, businessman Emanuel Steiner was presented with *fifty roses* by hooded Klansmen at a public ceremony held in broad daylight at the city's park. They were honoring the Jewish merchant on his "golden business anniversary." There is even a photograph of the presentation.[1560]



Jewish businessman Emanuel Steiner **is presented** with 50 roses by hooded Klansmen on his "golden business anniversary."

The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience relates the story of Minette Smith Saber, who told of the day her father was called into the bank president's office. The banker "proceeded to pull a Klan uniform from his closet and make a most unusual offer: 'Sam, you're a southern gentleman. You need to ride with us.' Smith declined."[1561]

One observer stated unequivocally that "Fulton county is the stro[ng]hold of the Klan in Georgia—the Ku Klux absolutely control Fulton county and Atlanta." Consequently, one might think that Atlanta would have been one of the worst cities in the United States for Jews to be living in during the 1920s. And yet Jewish scholar Arnold Shankman wrote, "That, however, was not the case."[1562] The American Jewish Historical Society found that the Klan's hostilities in southern Georgia "have been vented towards the Negro and not the Jew."[1563] Around 1922—a year which recorded the lynchings of eleven innocent Black Georgians—the Klan had an office "next door" to the headquarters of the Federation of Jewish Charities. In December 1925, Atlanta Jews held a fundraiser and Governor Clifford Walker and Mayor Walter Sims—both of them well-known Klansmen—"attended the affair as guests of honor."[1564]

Bernard Postal reveals that the Jewish owner and editor of the *Atlanta Journal*, John S. Cohen, was the son of a rabbi and *"high in the councils of the Ku Klux Klan."* He was one of several newspaper editors who "whipped whites into a frenzy" of race hate that ultimately led to the riot of 1906, which claimed the lives of as many as forty Blacks, left 150 wounded, and caused over a thousand to flee the city.[1565] Postal adds yet more layers of Jewish complicity:

> the attorneys for the dragons, kleagles and other officials have not infrequently been Jews. Similarly it has been shown that the manufacturers of the ubiquitous Klan night-gown have frequently been Jews. The present Klan has on several occasions insisted that it is not an anti-Semitic organization, a statement partially borne out by the fact that there are unquestionably Jewish members of the Klan in many states.[1566]

The Southern-born writer Harry Golden agreed with the conclusion of yet another respected Jewish writer, Harry Simonhoff:

> A lingering *tradition of religious tolerance* made it possible for Jews and Catholics to be members of the night-riding group.[1567]

At least one member of the Louisiana Ku Klux Klan was Jewish.[1568]

Dr. Clive Webb wrote that Birmingham was a city where "violent discrimination against African-Americans occurred on an almost daily basis" and where the KKK effectively controlled the

government. He affirms that Birmingham's Jewish community was nevertheless "relatively untroubled by the local Klan." Even though the Birmingham Ku Klux Klan boasted the largest membership of any Southern city, with 20,000 white men, "Jews were almost never the target of Klan violence…"[1569]

Some Birmingham churches were Klan recruitment sites, with robed Klansmen marching down the aisles. A city park was leased for a Klan rally and sixty thousand attended in a city with 32,000 registered voters. Two thousand new Klan members, including the future Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black—*who was invited to join by a Jew*—were initiated on that day. The city's rabbi, Morris Newfield, offered only casual concern, but no direct repudiation.[1570] Rabbi Newfield's own congregants, according to his biographer, "were not interested in changing the status quo or fighting the social mores of their day." Indeed, "some of these Jews believed blacks to be inferior."[1571]

The leading local businessman Irving Engel announced he was leaving Birmingham because he was "unhappy about living in a community that accepted complete domination by the Klan." When the Klan heard this, Engel himself reported, they "sent an *emissary* to me…[who] urged me not to go, saying that I was not the kind of Jew they were after."[1572] Dr. Webb makes this remarkable statement about the city notorious for its abuse of its Black citizens:

> Harmony was the hallmark of relations between the Klan and Birmingham's Jews. Members of both groups stood alongside each other in the local wing of the American Legion, which organized a series of public sporting events in the city

> every year. As local Jewish lawyer Karl Friedman recalls: "There was open communication between the representatives of the Klan and the Jewish Community."

Jewish pawnbroker Joe Denaburg "knew many members of the Klan," returning the secret greeting "Ikak" ("I am a Klansman!") with his own "Iyak." Not only was Denaburg friendly with them, he actually "supplied Klansmen with pistols and sheets."[1573] Denaburg's collaboration with the Klan occasioned no repudiation of this "distinctive and devoted Jew" by the larger Jewish community. Mark Elovitz wrote:

> For that matter, Mr. Denaburg quietly chuckled each time he sold a sheet to a Klansman, as he periodically did. Apparently, Joe Denaburg…never had any trouble with the K.K.K. Indeed, he recalled with a touch of sarcasm: "All of them were friends of mine!"[1574]

A Jewish immigrant in Alabama, with "fresh memories" of the Russian pogroms, casually recounted how

> I used to sell 'em the sheets, and Sam the tailor made them into robes. Let me tell you we had a good business going.[1575]

Noted American Jewish comedian Milton Supman, better known as Soupy Sales, wrote of his early life in Franklinton, North Carolina, where his Hungarian immigrant father was a dry goods merchant. They were the only Jews in the town at "a time when the Ku Klux Klan was a dominant and

deadly force in the South":

> Fortunately, they never bothered us—probably because *my father was the one who sold them their sheets*. They even invited him to join the Klan, but for obvious reasons he turned them down. Back then *racism was an accepted way of life*, simply part of the social fabric.[1576]

Klansmen patronized Jewish businesses and Jewish merchants serviced these valued customers. And though some historians have claimed that there were Klan "boycotts" of Jewish merchants, there is real doubt about the claim.[1577] As Webb puts it, "Klansmen more often had their eyes on a bargain than a boycott."[1578] The Klan's policy was to buy from and support its own members who were in business. This practice may have incidentally hurt Jewish businessmen who were not Klan members, but these actions cannot be considered targeted boycotts, as retailers of other ethnic groups were equally harmed.[1579] In Birmingham, Elovitz reports, "many stores owned by or employing Catholics, were boycotted and picketed by the Klan," but Jews were not affected.[1580]

All in all, seeking evidence of acrimony between Jews and the Ku Klux Klan is a largely fruitless enterprise. What's more, in the places where one would expect to find a hotbed of anti-Semitism, as in the notorious Jim Crow city of Birmingham, Alabama, one instead finds an unsettling "harmony" between the "People of the Book" and the hooded cross-burners. Elovitz candidly assesses this troubling coexistence:

> …there seems to be precious little, documented or anecdotal, to indicate

> that there were any noteworthy, negative, discomfort-producing incidents in which Jews were prominently harassed, picketed, boycotted or otherwise inconvenienced in a physical sense by the K.K.K. and its activities in Birmingham. Indeed, the K.K.K. locally never seemed to have any problem with Jewish people. Jews who lived through those years simply do not recall "anything about mistreatment of Jewish people."…Curiously, not only was there "very little intimidation" of Jewish people, but "in fact some of the Jewish businessmen were actually acquainted with the leadership of the Klan." Clearly, some of the prominent citizens involved in the Fraternal Order of Police, the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Elks, etc., were identified and well-known to be Klansmen. Many Jewish people were members of and held offices in these same organizations. As it happens, members of the Klan were wont to regularly frequent Jewish owned establishments.[1581]

1538 Stone, "West of Center," 219, 220; Jackson, *Ku Klux Klan in the City,* 76-77; Benjet, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Community," 158.

1539 Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s-1990s* (Fayetteville: Univ. of Arkansas Press, 1994), 100, 155, 165, 243, 493 n. 130, 258, 276, 197-98. Harold Hart's father, Max, was also "invited to join the Klan" in Louisiana. Ibid., 279. Blacks would most likely consider the Klan invitation to be strong proof of Hart's racism, but LeMaster casts it as a matter of Jewish pride.

1540 Stone, "West of Center," 225, 223. Clive Webb makes an identical statement in "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 93: "… the political stance of most southern Jews left them with little to fear from the Klan." Stone adds this curious expiation: "as Jews, however,

they could not endorse an organization that was officially committed to the principles of Anglo-Saxon Christian supremacy."

1541 Stone, "West of Center," 243, 247-48, 245.

1542 ISJL, "Forrest City, Arkansas"; LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry*, 211.

1543 Jackson, *Ku Klux Klan in the City,* 148; David H. Pierce, "Is The Jew a Friend of The Negro?" *Crisis,* Aug. 1925, 184; Isabel Boiko Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism: Negroes and Jews in New York, 1880 to World War II" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of New Mexico, 1973), 113; *The State* (Columbia, S.C.), 7 May 1905; *Idaho Daily Statesman*, 4 May 1919, 7. Also see (Harry) Karp's Kwality Klothes (advertisement) in the *Wilkes-Barre (Pennsylvania) Times Leader*, 3 Nov. 1922, 9.

1544 Hollace Ava Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas: Rabbis and Their Work* (College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 1999), 96; Stone, "West of Center," 248; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 145-46; Tom Kellam, "The Mind of an Anti-Semite: George W. Armstrong and the Ku Klux Klan in Texas," *Chronicles* 1, no. 1 (1994): 28.

1545 Stone, "West of Center," 247-48.

1546 Benjet, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Community," 139, 145-46.

1547 Emphasis ours. Stone, "West of Center," 248, 249; Benjet, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Community," 141; Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas*, 96-97. Weiner also claims that the rabbis of Galveston, Beaumont, and Tyler "publicly denounced the masked order," but provides no source for this claim.

1548 Stone, "West of Center," 223; Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks*, 2:284.

1549 Stone, "West of Center," 223; Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism,* 39-40.

1550 Stone, "West of Center," 223; Jackson, *Ku Klux Klan in the City,* 71. Benjet, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Community," 153: One of the most prominent Jewish dry-goods merchants in Dallas said that he and Zeke Marvin "were good close personal friends."

1551 Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas*, 31.

1552 Stone, "West of Center," 224.

1553 Rose G. Biderman, *They Came to Stay: The Story of the Jews of Dallas, 1870-1997* (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 2002), 44; Stone, "West of Center," 223. A kleagle is equivalent to a chief of staff. The question, though, is, What "qualities" did Titche exhibit that were attractive to racial terrorists?

1554 Stone, "West of Center," 243 n. 66.

1555 Alexander, *Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest*, 26.

1556 Ruth Scheinberg, "The Pekl: Folk Histories of Jewish Peddlers in the South, 1890-1914" (1980), 46, Old South Miscellany, MSS 49, Box 1, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University. "Frightening to the children" did not mean the Ku Klux Klan was *threatening* these Jewish children or any other whites. The "father of the new Ku Klux Klan," Thomas Dixon, said that one of his earliest recollections was of a KKK parade one night in 1869, during

which "young Dixon shivered with fear." See Maxwell Bloomfield, "Dixon's 'The Leopard's Spots': A Study in Popular Racism," *American Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (autumn 1964): 387; and Fry, *Night Riders in Black Folk History*, 122-23, 134-35.

1557 Scheinberg, "The Pekl," 46, 62. Scheinberg claims that Silverman "declined" the offer.

1558 Joseph L. Morrison, "A Southern Philo-Semite: Josephus Daniels of North Carolina," *Judaism* 12, no. 1 (winter 1963): 86; Evans, *The Provincials*, 148.

1559 Ida Libert Uchill, *Pioneers, Peddlers, and Tsadikim* (Denver: Sage Books, 1957; reprint, Boulder: Univ. Press of Colorado, 2000), 160-61.

1560 Underwood & Underwood photograph, *Presbyterian Pastor in Klan Robes Praises Jewish Merchant and Klan Presents Flowers to Him [o]n His Golden Anniversary*, Aug. 27, 1924, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b44269.

1561 David S. Sampliner, "Telling the Story: A Collective Oral History of Monroe," *Circa* 9, no. 1 (spring 2000): 15.

1562 Arnold Shankman, "Atlanta Jewry, 1900–1930," *AJA* 25, no. 2 (Nov. 1973): 151.

1563 James Lebeau, "Profile of a Southern Jewish Community: Waycross, Georgia," *AJHQ* 58, no. 4 (June 1969): 441. A review of the horrific violence against Blacks in Georgia is in Donald L. Grant, *The Way It Was in the South: The Black Experience in Georgia* (Secaucus, NJ: Carol Publishing Group, 1993), 316-21.

1564 Shankman, "Atlanta Jewry," 151-52. Similarly, Asheville, North Carolina, Jews established a Jewish Community Center across the street from the headquarters of the virulently anti-Semitic and Nazi-sympathizing Silver Shirts League in 1939. See ISJL, "Asheville, North Carolina."

1565 Dominic J. Capeci, Jr., and Jack C. Knight, "Reckoning with Violence: W.E.B. Du Bois and the 1906 Atlanta Race Riot," *JSoHis* 62, no. 4 (Nov. 1996): 744.

1566 Postal, "Jews in the Ku Klux Klan," 60.

1567 Emphasis ours. Golden, *Our Southern Landsman*, 129-30.

1568 Yvonne Brown, "Tolerance and Bigotry in Southwest Louisiana: The Ku Klux Klan, 1921-23," *Louisiana History* 47, no. 2 (spring 2006): 158.

1569 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 145-46; Terry Barr, "Rabbi Grafman and Birmingham's Civil Rights Era," in *The Quiet Voices: Southern Rabbis and Black Civil Rights, 1880s to 1990s,* eds. Mark K. Bauman and Berkley Kalin (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1997), 170. Elovitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie*, 85: "[T]he overarching majority of Birmingham's Jews were not personally 'afraid for themselves' or affected by the activities of the Klan…" Elovitz goes on to give a list of Klan targets that does not include Jews: "drinkers, Negroes, friends of Negroes, Catholics, friends of Catholics, immigrants, Sunday movies, divorce, and non-conformity in general." Ultimately, the city would become a hotbed of violent white supremacist extremism, earning the moniker "Bombingham."

1570 Mark Cowett, *Birmingham's Rabbi: Morris Newfield and Alabama, 1895-1940* (University, AL: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1986), 137, 136, 140-41. According to Justice Black, "It was a Jew, my closest friend, Herman Beck, who asked me to join it (the Klan)." Postal and Koppman, *American Jewish Landmarks*, 2:32; Evans, *The Provincials*, 252-53.

1571 Mark Cowett, "Morris Newfield, Alabama, and Blacks, 1895-1940," in *The Quiet Voices*, 44, 45. Cowett links two sentences that express two irreconcilable ideas (p. 44): "Morris Newfield was an advocate of social justice who believed that all men should be treated fairly and equally. He cannot be said to have supported black rights in every situation…"

1572 Elovitz, *Century of Jewish Life in Dixie*, 86. Note that this racial terrorist is here (and in the writings of others) described by the respectful term "emissary."

1573 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 145-46; Elovitz, *Century of Jewish Life in Dixie*, 87. This, at a time when the Klan was orchestrating a boycott against all Catholic stores in Birmingham. Also, according to an informant, the greeting "Ayak" stood for "Are you a klansman?" The return of "Akia" means "A klansman I am." See Arnold S. Rice, *The Ku Klux Klan in American Politics* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1962), 18; Raphael S. Ezekiel, *The Racist Mind: Portraits of Neo Nazis and Klansmen* (New York: Viking, 1995), 8; Stephen J. Whitfield, "Jewish Fates, Altered States," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 305. Jews were known to supply the pro-slavery Confederate Army with uniforms. See Richard A. Hawkins, "Lynchburg's Swabian Jewish Entrepreneurs in War and Peace," *SJH* 3 (2000): 62; ISJL, "Athens, Georgia"; ISJL, "Columbus, Georgia"; ISJL, "Savannah, Georgia"; ISJL, "West Point, Georgia."

1574 Elovitz, *Century of Jewish Life in Dixie*, 87; ISJL, "Birmingham, Alabama."

1575 Evans, *The Provincials*, 253. See also the article by Southern Jew David Pierce, "Is The Jew a Friend of The Negro?" 184: "…the Jew of the merchant class, the ubiquitous representative, is satisfied to accept the situation as he finds it." Another Jewish man, Samuel Rosenberg of Hampton, Virginia, wrote that "One of the obstacles which helps to lower [the Black man's] standard of living is the retail merchant….Southern Jews from Rabbis to merchants regard the Negro as a second or third class being." Webb, "Jewish Merchants and Black Customers," 72, 75: "Ultimately," admits Webb, "African Americans perceived Jews as an element of white oppression."

1576 Emphasis ours. Soupy Sales and Charles Salzberg, *Soupy Sez! My Zany Life and Times* (New York: M. Evans, 2001), 15. Presumably, "anti-Semitism" in Nazi Germany "*was an accepted way of life*, simply part of the social fabric."

1577 Alexander, *Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest*, 25. See also Benjet, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Community," 133; Elovitz, *Century of Jewish Life in Dixie,* 86-87. According to John Higham, *Send These to Me: Jews and Other Immigrants in Urban America* (New York: Atheneum, 1975), 170, whatever boycotts of Jewish merchants there were, they "usually failed abysmally."

1578 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 146-47. See Stephen J. Whitfield, "In the High Cotton," review of *The Jew Store: A Family Memoir*, by Stella Suberman, *SJH* 4 (2001): 142.

1579 An interesting take on this is by Morton Rosenstock, in his book *Louis Marshall, Defender of Jewish Rights* (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1965), 206, wherein he writes that in Indianapolis "the Klan started its own department store, named the One Hundred Per Cent American Store, *in order to drive Jewish merchants out of business* [emphasis ours]." Absent any Klan statements or activities to this effect, Rosenstock's idea that starting one's own store is, *in itself*, an act of aggression toward Jews—and not toward other retailers—is a measure of his feeling of Jewish entitlement to the retail market. In fact, according to Jackson (*Ku Klux Klan in the City,* 148), the Klan's boycott action in Indianapolis was initiated because "Catholics reportedly boycotted Protestant merchants identified as Klansmen," leading to the Klan retaliation. In any event, several of such "One Hundred Per Cent American" businesses "went broke." See Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism,* 166. See also Uchill, *Pioneers, Peddlers, and Tsadikim*, 162; and Rice, *Ku Klux Klan in American Politics*, 26.

1580 Elovitz, *Century of Jewish Life in Dixie*, 86, 87.

1581 Ibid.*,* 87. Also, "no antisemitic [Ku Klux Klan] incidents were reported in Montgomery." See Mary Stanton, "At One with the Majority," *SJH* 9 (2006): 164.

The Ku Klux Klan in Jewish Folklore

[A] cceptance [of Jews] by the Ku Klux Klan!? When? Where?

—

Morris U. Schappes, editor of Jewish Currents magazine

It would be impossible to record the contribution that Jewish people have made toward the Negro's struggle for freedom, it has been so great.

—

Martin Luther King, 1965

Generally, Jewish spokespeople are quick to point out that the Klan has always represented a

dire threat to *all* "minorities." And they are careful to include themselves among this group as *equally* threatened.[1582] On the contrary, the Ku Klux Klan has always found a hospitable place in Southern Jewish folklore, which often depicts the Klan amiably, nostalgically, and even humorously. In the 1980s, Dr. Carolyn Lipson-Walker collected Southern Jews' remembrances of their life and culture and found that some of them pined for the halcyon days of anti-Black Klan terrorism. According to Dr. Lipson-Walker,

> Accounts of the Klan's *geniality* are told [by Southern Jews] to…show how much they belong, and…to show how much they differ from other [non-Southern] Jews and how well-accepted they are in the South.

Marie Brown told how her Jewish grandfather helped organize the "night rider" movement of the post–Civil War years, a forerunner of the Klan. Night riders were patrolling bands of white men who "impersonated ghosts" and committed acts of violence to terrorize and immobilize Blacks.[1583]

> "We have got to frighten these colored people. They're getting out of hand." And they started the night riders with the hoods. And Granddaddy was one of the first night riders. Nice little Jewish boy in Mississippi.

The Jewish woman "laughed while she told me this," Dr. Lipson-Walker reported, "and she seemed generally prouder than she was embarrassed by her racist ancestor."[1584] Former slave owner Sam Wolf, from Osyka, Mississippi, watched as Ku Klux riders

stormed through the town. Some members of the Wolf household were frightened by this procession of enrobed terrorists as it passed their house—that is, until one of the Klansmen shouted, "God bless Sam Wolf!"[1585]

A descendant of Major Adolph Proskauer of Mobile, Alabama, was "tickled" when she told the story of Proskauer running for sheriff of Mobile County. He was active in the synagogue at the time he sought office, and had previously led a division of the Confederate Army.

> [A]nd I believe that, I'm not sure whether I heard it right, whether whoever was running against him was either Black or somebody that favored Blacks. But the Klan was out and supported Adolph Proskauer for sheriff. Which is the first and only time the Klan ever supported a Jew for public office. [She laughs.][1586]

Jewish children grew up hearing family stories of the night-riding exploits of their Jewish Ku Klux grandparents. Mississippian John Hart Lewis's grandfather served four years with the Confederate Army and told eight-year-old Johnny of his membership in the Klan: "[T]hey were not anti-Jewish," he stressed. The great-grandfather of New Orleans Jew Robert Goldman, Meyer Goldman, told him that "Like many of the better class of white ex-Confederates," Meyer sought membership in the vigilante organization Knights of the White Camellia, one of the many Klan auxiliaries. He rose rapidly through its ranks, becoming its chief officer. Other Jews who donned the white robes included Simon Benjamin of Ocala, Florida, and Colonel Waring Russell of Georgia. Russell, a member of the

slave-dealing Sheftall clan, was eulogized after his death in 1914 for his role in having preserved "the supremacy of the white people."[1587]

To illustrate "how small town Jews are wholeheartedly accepted by their small town neighbors," one Jewish man told the story of a friend who was made "an honorary [Klan] member [laughs]."[1588] In Atlanta, writes Dr. Clive Webb, "Jews lived largely without fear of any threat to their lives or livelihoods" from the Ku Klux Klan. Atlantan Ethel Myers could not recall a single incident of Klan action against Jews: "[N]othing has happened that I know of that the Ku Klux did."

Marvin Goldstein recalled his father's wool-sorting business:

> I remember as a kid how we'd get on the wagon…and then we'd go to the headquarters of the Ku Klux Klan where they would do the cutting of their white garments and we would pick up the remnants which would be packaged and sent back to mills to make white paper and white cloth with.

Goldstein claimed he "didn't give much thought" to the nature of such a business relationship. Saul Blumenthal's family owned a store northeast of Atlanta. Blumenthal admitted that his father too "sold the sheeting to the local Ku Klux Klan for their uniforms."[1589] And Jewish merchant Simon Edison vividly recalled watching the Klan ride through the streets of Atlanta in the Edison Brothers' hoods and robes.[1590]

Dotty London Stetelman of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, said that her father was so familiar with Klan members that when attending the parades of

hooded Klan marchers, “He could recognize the men by the shoes he had sold [to them].”[1591]

Scholar Leonard Rogoff claims that in North Carolina in the 1920s the Klan “twisted its focus from blacks to Jews and Catholics.” But in the years between 1920 and 1929, 315 people were lynched in America; of those, 34 were white and not one lynching victim was Jewish.[1592] And this number does not take into account the wholesale massacres of Blacks, as in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1921, when as many as 300 Blacks were savagely slaughtered.[1593] Rogoff immediately follows up his claim with another contradictory one:

> [I]t was typical of Durham that the local Klan was relatively benign and that its public face was Americanism.

The Klan, he said, “held rallies, parades, and banquets,” and one local Jew reminisced about a Klan parade that was a “big social event [and] everybody in town was there.” Durham’s Klan “was far from intimidating,” Rogoff wrote, “and it was not prone to violence.” According to a Durham Jew,

> Blacks stayed off the streets, but [he] could not remember receiving any parental warnings to stay away. He [a Jew] took a seat in the front row for the Klan rally.

Durham Jews were among the 200 attendees at a 1927 Klan rally, where Georgia Klansman Dr. W. A. Hamlett spoke at the new civic auditorium. “The stage was set with a fiery cross above an American flag.” A Klansman invited Jew Melvin Gladstein to join the Durham group. “I don’t think the Klan was anti-Semitic in Durham,” the Jewish informant

recalled. “If the Jewish population didn’t bother them, they didn’t bother us.”

According to Rogoff, “small-town Jewish folklore often depicts the Klan in bemused tones. Klansmen, who were frequently prominent citizens, remained customers and friends.” A Jew in Muncie, Indiana, recalled that his father took him to Klan parades as a child, noting that “the Klansmen railed against blacks and Catholics while remaining friendly to Jews.”[1594]

In 1929 when Jews met at Beth-El Synagogue to mourn the death of Jews in Hebron, Palestine, a Dr. Manning, “who regularly spoke at Klan rallies, rose from his sickbed to express sympathy from his church.” When a prominent Baptist preacher began delivering “anti-Semitic” sermons, a local Jewish leader, Dr. Nathan Rosenstein, approached a Baptist friend “for a heart-to-heart talk.” They both then met with the preacher, “who was convinced to mend his views.”[1595]

Southern Jews are considered “just one of the boys,” wrote Jewish researcher Dr. Carolyn Lipson-Walker:

> I was surprised that when I directly asked for stories about the Klan, presuming that I would hear stories about persecution and hostility, *I heard primarily stories about Klan cordiality toward Jews. Humorous anecdotes told about invitations to Klan rallies or to join the organization* are generally told with a sense of irony and they function to make Southern Jews feel more secure about their status in the South.[1596]

1582 Seth Forman, “The Unbearable Whiteness of Being Jewish:

Desegregation in the South and the Crisis of Jewish Liberalism," in *Strangers and Neighbors*, 624-25.

1583 Emphasis ours. Carolyn Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all': The Folklore and Culture of Southern Jews" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana Univ., 1986), 223. Lipson-Walker's language mutes and sanitizes violent racism, as when she wrote that the patrols merely "discourage[d] the unauthorized movement of Blacks at night." She accepts the notion that free Black citizens needed white "authorization" to travel at any time to any place, and exonerates this particular Gestapo-like "patrol" from the murders, rapes, robberies, torture, lynchings, and beatings night riders routinely perpetrated against Blacks.

1584 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 223.

1585 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 93; ISJL, "Osyka, Mississippi." The "ghostly" processions of hooded Klansmen were meant to be frightening or awe-inspiring to all, but specifically threatening to Blacks. It should not be assumed that Jews were "frightened" because they feared "anti-Semitism."

1586 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 223-24. Actually, there is a long list of Jewish officeholders in the heart of Klan country, including Jewish mayors and town councilors, all of whom would have needed (and wanted) Klan support to get elected. See this document's chapter titled "Jewish Political Power in the Apartheid South." Also see Rosen, *Jewish Confederates,* 360.

1587 Marcus, *United States Jewry,* 3:152, 772 n. 11; Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 94-95.

1588 Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 224.

1589 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 146-47.

1590 Burton Alan Boxerman, "The Edison Brothers, Shoe Merchants: Their Georgia Years," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 57, no. 4 (winter 1973): 518.

1591 "On the Road," *Circa* 3, no. 2 (fall 1993): 3. See a discussion of the recurrence of these kinds of "tropes," in Eliza R.L. McGraw, *Two Covenants: Representations of Southern Jewishness* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 2005), 36-37, 87; Eliza R. L. McGraw, "An 'Intense Heritage': Southern Jewishness in Literature and Film," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 222-23.

1592 Leonard Rogoff, *Homelands: Southern Jewish Identity in Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina* (Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2001), 132; Allen D. Grimshaw, ed., *Racial Violence in the United States* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 58.

1593 Scott Ellsworth, *Death in a Promised Land: The Tulsa Race Riot of 1921* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1982), 69.

1594 Rogoff, *Homelands*, 132-33.

1595 Ibid., 133.

1596 Emphasis ours. Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 222.

In Search of Jewish Anti-Klanism

Most rank-and-file Klan members I have met…are basically good people.

—

Morris Seligman Dees, Southern Poverty Law Center

From Reconstruction to late into the Civil Rights Movement, there is little trace of Jewish activity that could be called anti-Klan activism. In the case of the original Klan of the 1860s and 1870s, there is on record only evidence of organized Jewish *assistance* to the terrorists. Jews were both Klan members and ideological allies. In the era of the revived Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s, there was some rhetorical Jewish opposition in isolated instances but no organized anti-Klan efforts by any of the national Jewish organizations. Scholar David J. Goldberg wrote that Jewish leaders showed "far more anxiety" about Ivy League quotas, immigration restrictions, and Henry Ford's beliefs and that they "did not appear to have viewed the Klan as a serious threat…"[1597]

It wasn't until 1938, a full 23 years after the Klan's revival, that a major Jewish defense organization finally commissioned a study of the

Klan's reported "anti-Semitism"—not of its widespread terrorism against Blacks. A year before that, another national Jewish agency decided to appoint a committee just "to see whether the problem is one with which [we] should deal."[1598] These were tepid actions for a people representing themselves to be in imminent danger from the Klan.

The Dies Committee of the United States Congress took up the issue in 1938 under the vice-chairmanship of Samuel Dickstein, a Jewish congressman from New York. Despite many witnesses implicating the Klan in numerous illegalities, the government—with no perceptible protest from the Jewish community—concluded that there was no need to examine Klan activities.[1599] Another Jewish agency, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, who today claims that the Klan was once "America's preeminent terrorist organization," seemed to concede in 1941 that the Klan was not actually "anti-Semitic," but "represents an extra-legal movement to take the law into its own hands *so far as Negroes and Catholics are concerned*."[1600] The Jewish War Veterans was founded in 1896, but took 50 years to finally adopt a resolution in 1946 to ask the government to see whether the Klan was violating any laws.[1601]

At the height of the Klan's power in the 1920s, the Anti-Defamation League's official organ, published monthly, hardly mentioned the Klan at all. In one article called "The Klan and the Election," the editors wrote that *they* "take no political stand," but that the president of the United States should have "spoken a brave word of denunciation." But, as for Jews:

> As voters we will act as citizens and not

> as Jews and obey the dictates of our conscience and our best judgment. Where we can we will strike at the Klan, *not so much because it is anti-Jewish*, but because, being anti-Jewish, it is un-American.[1602]

Jewish retailers had problems with the Klan's open promotion of "white Christian labor," but not for the reasons one might think. According to Stella Suberman, whose father ran a retail store in the South, Jewish merchants reasoned thus:

> Why limit the hoped-for prosperity to whites? Did it perhaps mean there were to be no jobs for Negroes? If so, this would mean a Jew store without solid Negro trade, and this was impossible.[1603]

In some quarters, Jewish opposition to the Ku Klux Klan was not even taken for granted as a clear Judaic principle. Rabbi David Goldberg fielded a question from a reader of the newspaper he edited: "Should a Jew oppose the Klan?" The question itself voiced the uncertainty of some Jews about what Judaism might prescribe on the subject of racial terrorism.[1604]

When forced into public pronouncements on the Klan, the evasive Jewish editor of the *Texas Jewish Herald* denied that its growth affected Jews at all: "[T]he Klan is a Protestant ailing and should be cured by the Protestant," he wrote in 1924.[1605] In Colorado, a Jewish historian claims, "Not even a handful of Jews fought the Klan…"[1606]

In the one instance when some Jews tried to coalesce to fight the Klan, other Jews stepped in to undermine the effort. Louis Marshall (1856–1929)

was an attorney and leader of the American Jewish Committee, which adopted a "policy" described as "watchful inaction." Jews, Marshall believed, "need not take the Klan *too seriously*, but should regard it with *patience* and a sense of proportion."[1607] He was considered the most prominent American Jew at the time, with connections to the White House, and he considered himself on the national level "the spokesman for our citizens of the Jewish faith."[1608]

In 1922, there were 57 lynchings in America, 51 of them involved Black victims, none Jewish. But when the Jewish organization Order B'rith Abraham publicly stated its intention to organize Jewish groups to fight against the Ku Klux Klan, Marshall *immediately tried to stop them*. He sent a letter to the organization's leader: "I think that you are making a grave mistake and that the method you are choosing would be most unfortunate." His next statements are truly remarkable:

> I cannot understand why the Jews should…regard themselves as being the objects of the attack of the Ku Klux Klan. Personally I have no doubt that many people connected with the Klan are making anti-Jewish propaganda. But do you believe that it is wise to recognize that the organization itself is directing its attack against the Jews?….I have taken the position that this is not a Jewish or a Catholic issue.[1609]

Marshall's biographer Morton Rosenstock confirmed that Marshall and the American Jewish Committee

> attempted to restrain their fellow-Jews from taking precipitate anti-Klan action.

> Influential Jews, leaders of organizations, editors of newspapers and magazines—all were urged to refrain from making a Jewish issue out of the Klan. Marshall thought it unwise for Jewish fraternal groups, such as the B'nai B'rith that were themselves secret orders, to condemn another secret order…[1610]

Here we have the *most* prominent American Jew—a scholar and constitutional lawyer, an advisor to presidents, and a key NAACP strategist—forcefully denying that the rise of the Ku Klux Klan was a Jewish issue at all. Rosenstock continues:

> Marshall refused to provide financial aid or encouragement to anti-Klan candidates in Southern states. When Texas Republican leaders who were seeking funds for their candidate against the Klan-backed Democratic Senatorial nominee were referred in 1922 to Marshall, he refused to lend his support...[1611]

This should not have been surprising. When, in 1912, the American eugenics movement—a pre-Hitler association of whites committed to the racial cleansing of America—asked Marshall's legal opinion on the "sterilization of criminals and degenerates," he did not repudiate the notion. Instead, he gave it his formidable legal blessings. He opined:

> I understand that the operation of vasectomy is painless and has no effect upon the person upon whom it is imposed other than to render it

> impossible for him to have progeny. If it could be said that such a punishment would only be inflicted in the case of confirmed criminals, there would be strong reasons, founded on considerations of the public welfare, which would justify its imposition….So in regard to the legislation which you now have under consideration….I fear that the public is not as yet prepared to deal with this problem; it requires education on the subject.

Like Hitler, Marshall admired the goals of the eugenicists and worked to help them meet their genocidal goals within the confines of the U.S. Constitution:

> I cannot, however, refrain from expressing the general opinion that the movement is one which is based on sound considerations. The difficulty is, however, in adopting proper safeguards to adequately protect those who are not hopelessly confirmed criminals, degenerates, or defectives.[1612]

On June 14, 1922, thousands of Blacks marched to demand passage of the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill, which would have provided for Blacks a measure of protection from the terror of the white American lynch mobs. Calling it "The Shame of America," Blacks watched in horror as twenty-eight of their own flesh and blood were burned at the stake *in America* between 1918 and 1921. The feeling of outrage at these atrocities was so intense that the NAACP was moved to warn the bill's foes that they would "use every avenue of influence to punish the

persons who defeat it."[1613] Marshall actually opposed the bill and stood in its way. Its passage, he thought, would result in the destruction of the Constitution and set "an evil precedent," leading to "anarchy and mob action." Ironically, Marshall believed that the issue of lynching should be left to the states—his position being an early example of the very "states' rights" argument employed by Southern segregationists against the work of Dr. Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement. In fact, the Southern senators orchestrated a filibuster of the anti-lynching bill using this very argument.[1614]

Memphis rabbi William Fineshriber was characterized by his biographer as being engaged in "a war with the Klan." But by no means should this suggest that the rabbi, who held the religious post from 1915 to 1924, was in favor of Black human rights. He actually defended the Klan of the "old days":

> It [the Klan of the 1920s] was taken from the old body [the original Klan] who were determined that the negro should not wield the scepter of government over the white man....The klan was therefore the inevitable step. *It served its purpose admirably. It functioned with a certain amount of law and decency.*[1615]

The rabbi was opposed to the "new" Klan for the same ideological reasons that *Birth of a Nation* writer Thomas Dixon opposed it. Dixon was considered "the father of the new Ku Klux Klan" based on his body of racist writings, but he spoke disparagingly of the often disjointed and unfocused motivations of the new revived Klan his screenplay inspired. Like Dixon, the rabbi romanticized "the

original Klan," which he thought performed a great service for the white South. But the "new Klan" of the 1920s, because it targeted more than just Blacks, was destructive to law and order.[1616] Rabbi Fineshriber shows how one can be "anti-Klan" *and* a true believer in white supremacy to boot.

1597 David J. Goldberg, "Unmasking the Ku Klux Klan: The Northern Movement against the KKK, 1920-1925," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 15, no. 4 (summer 1996): 36.

1598 Cheryl Greenberg, "The Southern Jewish Community and the Struggle for Civil Rights," in *African Americans and Jews in the Twentieth Century: Studies in Convergence and Conflict,* eds. V. P. Franklin et al. (Columbia, MO: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1998), 124-25, 135. Apparently, neither group went any further than commissioning a study or appointing a committee. Greenberg adds, in her *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006), 55: "If the Klan was not clearly a problem…it is hard to imagine what would qualify." After much internal conflict, the first "important Jewish community of the South" finally spoke out against "mob action" in 1946, a full 31 years after the 1915 lynching of Leo Frank in Atlanta was said to have sensitized Jews to the horrors of lynching. Ibid., 147-48. The use of the euphemism "mob action," rather than the harsher term "lynching" (where the illegal act of murder is clearly indicated), is a significant concession to Southern sensibilities. See Christopher Waldrep, "War of Words: The Controversy over the Definition of Lynching, 1899-1940," *JSoHis* 66, no. 1 (Feb. 2000).

1599 "Ku Klux Klan," *UJE*, 6:481.

1600 Emphasis ours. Greenberg, "The Southern Jewish Community," 157.

1601 Rice, *Ku Klux Klan in American Politics*, 110. The Jewish War Veterans' 1967 resolution sharply attacked the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King for his criticism of American racism and the Vietnam War: "It is utterly incredible [that his] denunciation of our government should manifest itself in such an ugly parallel." See Mark Lane and Dick Gregory, *Code Name "Zorro"* (Engle Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1977), 51.

1602 Emphasis ours. See *B'nai B'rith Magazine* 39, no. 2, Nov. 1924. Also, see Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters*, 55; Deborah Dash Moore, *B'nai B'rith and the Challenge of Ethnic Leadership* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1981), 116-18. Moore shows no ADL activity concerning the Klan. For the ADL's current view see their "Extremism in America: About the Ku Klux Klan," Anti-Defamation League, 2007, http://www.adl.org/learn/ ext_us/kkk.asp?xpicked=4&item=18.

1603 Stella Suberman, *The Jew Store: A Family Memoir* (Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1998), 109.

1604 Stone, "West of Center," 266.

1605 Ibid., 243.

1606 Uchill, *Pioneers, Peddlers, and Tsadikim*, 161. Uchill mentions one Jewish senator who was anti-Klan.

1607 Emphasis ours. Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall,* 208.

1608 Charles Reznikoff, ed., *Louis Marshall, Champion of Liberty: Selected Papers and Addresses,* vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1957), 392-93.

1609 Reznikoff, *Louis Marshall*, 389-90; "Ku Klux Klan," *UJE*, 6:481. Amazingly, the *UJE* claims that Marshall "stood out for his denunciation" of the Klan. Moorfield Storey, then the NAACP's white president, personally invited Marshall to join the NAACP executive board. At first Marshall declined, but later replied on November 30, 1923:

> ….I shall be very glad to consent to serve. I agree with you that, now that Ku Klux Klan is sowing the seeds of discord throughout the country, it is the duty of those who believe in the maintenance of America's best traditions to unite in counteracting that evil influence.

Harold Cruse, *Plural But Equal: A Critical Study of Blacks and Minorities and America's Plural Society* (New York: William Morrow, 1987), 119. Edgar Goldberg, publisher of the *Texas Jewish Herald,* was hostile toward "'uptown' Jews" like Marshall, but on the KKK he was in full agreement with the prominent New Yorker, believing that "the Klan is a Protestant ailing and should be cured by the Protestant." See Bryan Edward Stone, "Edgar Goldberg and the *Texas Jewish Herald*: Changing Coverage and Blended Identity," *SJH* 7 (2004): 88, 108 n. 76.

1610 Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall,* 210-11.

1611 Ibid., 211. Another appeal for assistance from the ex-governor of Oklahoma, who had been ousted by a Klan-dominated legislature, was likewise met with no response from Marshall. This is not the first time the inaction of the American Jewish Committee under Marshall undermined Black interests. In 1914, the AJC refused to fight Woodrow Wilson's wholesale racial cleansing of Blacks from jobs within the United States government. See Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism," 32-33.

1612 Louis Marshall, of the Wall St. law firm Guggenheimer, Untermeyer & Marshall, in a letter to Judge Warren W. Foster, April 12, 1912, reprinted in Harry Hamilton Laughlin, *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States* (Chicago: Psychopathic Laboratory of the Municipal Court of Chicago, 1922), 334-36. Compare the Marshall Plan with the 1933 Nazi "Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring," or Sterilization Law, which allowed the compulsory sterilization of any citizen who the Nazi regime determined suffered from alleged genetic disorders. See the list of such "American" maladies in ibid., 16ff. Upon hearing of the Nazi racial-purification plan, an unnamed member of an American eugenics organization said that Hitler "should be made an honorary member of the Eugenics Record Office," the very organization that Marshall advised. See Robert Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1988), 101.

1613 “Silent Negroes March in Lynching Protest,” *NYT*, 15 June 1922, 3; “Negroes Warn Foes of Anti-Lynching Bill,” *NYT*, 24 June 1922, 26; NAACP paid advertisement in *NYT*, 23 Nov. 1922, 19. The campaign for the Dyer Bill is discussed in Dray, *At the Hands of Persons Unknown*, 258-73. The burning of Blacks was rare before 1890, but between 1919 and 1929, white mobs burned 15 percent of the 416 Blacks they lynched. See Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1999), 102.

1614 In this opinion, Marshall stood against two former U.S. attorneys general, 19 state supreme court justices, 24 state governors, and 39 mayors of large cities. See NAACP paid notice, *NYT*, 23 Nov. 1922, 19. In any event, Marshall chose not to offer alternative legal advice or assistance in forming legislation that *would* have met his constitutional objections. Also, see NAACP secretary James Weldon Johnson’s position on the bill’s constitutionality in *NYT*, 2 July 1922, 69. Worse still, Marshall had opposed this states’ rights argument in the case of convicted murderer Leo Frank when he argued for federal intervention on Frank’s behalf because, he believed, the state of Georgia unfairly prosecuted him for murder. See Reznikoff, *Louis Marshall*, 422-25. No anti-lynching bill was ever passed in the U.S. Congress, but Marshall was instrumental in getting eugenics laws established in many states. See where Marshall is a legal advisor to eugenics movement leaders, in *Report of the Committee to Study and to Report on the Best Practical Means of Cutting Off the Defective Germ-Plasm in the American Population,* Eugenics Record Office, Bulletin No. 10a (Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, New York, 1914), 2, 5. See also Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters*, 61, who points out that the NAACP *unsuccessfully* attempted to get Jewish organizational support for the Costigan-Wagner anti-lynching bill in 1934, garnering a donation of just $25 from the American Jewish Congress and $100 from the American Jewish Committee—far short of the requested $1,000. This, despite the fact that it was estimated that in the 1940s, Jews “raised close to one billion dollars in voluntary contributions for domestic and overseas welfare needs.” Nathan Reich, “The Role of the Jews in the American Economy,” in *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* (New York, 1953), 5:203.

1615 Emphasis ours. Berkley Kalin, “A Plea for Tolerance: Fineshriber in Memphis,” in *The Quiet Voices*, 58, 59.

1616 Kalin, “A Plea for Tolerance,” 58-59. Kalin, onetime president of the Southern Jewish Historical Society (1995-97), erroneously asserts that “Fineshriber’s attacks on racism and bigotry continued into the 1920s,” ignoring the critical distinction the rabbi makes between the “original” and “revived” Klan.

A Texas Gentile Fights the "Ku-Jew-Klux Kombination"

During its Lone Star reign of terror, the Texas Klan had murdered Black men, women, and children, castrated Black men, intimidated Black voters, destroyed Black property, and violently suppressed Black labor unions. But the Texas Klan also was known to target "immoral" whites, and it particularly delighted in tarring and feathering, whipping, and otherwise menacing errant white citizens by the dozen.[1617] "Farmer Jim" Ferguson, a white Gentile, was as racist as any Southerner, Jew or Gentile, yet he was considered "the greatest anti-Klansman in Texas" and—*because of his anti-Klan stance*—an enemy of the Jews.[1618]

James Edward Ferguson stood against the sheer lawlessness of the Klan in the 1920s and boldly promoted policies designed to destroy the hooded order.[1619] This he did at a time when the Klan was at the peak of its national power, boasting at least 100,000 members in Texas alone. Ferguson fought his way through the state's Klan-infested political establishment and passed a strict anti-mask law that called for the imprisonment of anyone appearing in public or in private meetings in disguise. He proposed a requirement that secret and fraternal societies be required to expose the names of their members for public scrutiny.[1620]

Ferguson sought allies in his crusade and believed that among them should be the Jewish community of Texas. He approached many of Dallas's leading Jewish merchants seeking advertisements for his *Ferguson Forum* newspaper, but "the response was tepid." Ferguson reported that one Jewish firm bought $25 worth of ads, in exchange for which Ferguson bought $37 worth of

floor covering. The company declined to buy more advertising. Another Jewish-owned company spent $8 in the *Forum* on the same day it bought $400 worth of ads in the city's Klan newspaper![1621]

The disillusioned anti-Klan crusader issued a scathing editorial stating he was "puzzled as well as disappointed" by the apparent Jewish indifference to his campaign. One of the major Jewish merchants revealed to Ferguson that he could not give him any business because he, Ferguson, *"had been so emphatic in [his] statements against the Ku Klux."* Ferguson suspected not that Jewish fear of the Klan was motivating their reticence, but that Jewish businessmen and the Klan had

> hatched in Dallas an unholy alliance… whereby the Ku Klux are to get the big offices and the Big Jews are to get the big business.

He warned his readers that if they bought anything from a Jewish merchant that they were "buying from the friend of the Ku Klux." He vowed to "bust up this Ku-Jew-Klux Kombination if it is the last thing I ever do."[1622] Furthermore, he insisted that

> As between the Dallas Jews and the Dallas Ku Klux, I want to say that the Ku Klux is the better of the two.[1623]

Jewish representatives did not deny their Klan connection; nor did they use Ferguson's attack to affirm openly a righteous repugnance toward the Ku Kluxers. Speaking for the Jews accused, Fort Worth rabbi Harry Merfeld responded to Ferguson, declaring that Jews would refuse

> in no uncertain terms to have fellowship with or to be identified in any way, however remote, with any movement sponsored by you and your kind.

Ferguson simply called the rabbi a mouthpiece for the Klan.[1624] As a result of this acrimonious episode, Ferguson, the greatest anti-Klan crusader in Texas history, made himself "permanently unacceptable as a candidate to many Texas Jews." Dr. Bryan Edward Stone asserted that Jewish voters continued to feel "bitterness" for Ferguson, earning him—*not the Ku Klux Klan*—the label "anti-Semitic." In Ferguson's senatorial race against Felix D. Robertson, a well-known Klan-backed candidate,

> many [Jews] probably found it easier to support Robertson…who *might* have been an anti-Semite, over Ferguson, an anti-Klan shadow candidate who clearly *was* an anti-Semite.[1625]

Ferguson's governorship ended in 1917 amidst charges of misusing public funds, but his wife, Miriam, took up the mantle and successfully ran for office in 1924. The *Dallas Morning News* said that her election "will sound the death knell of the klan as a political power in this State"—but she would have to do it without Jewish support.[1626] The Klan mobilized to defeat her and even "appealed for Jewish votes." Ferguson beat the Klan candidate by 100,000 votes and ushered into office other anti-Klan candidates.[1627] Ironically, one recent article states plainly that in Texas during this time, "There is no record of any association between Jewish and African American groups," but there is evidence aplenty of associations between the Jews and the Ku Klux Klan.[1628]

Other drama in national politics found Jews allied with the Klan. In 1924, the Klan played a significant role at the Democratic National Convention in New York, where they tried to thwart the presidential aspirations of the Catholic candidate Al Smith. Delegates tried to adopt a resolution condemning the Klan, but several Jews voted against it, among them Mrs. J. Kochtitsky, of Missouri, Mrs. Sam Guggenheim, of Kentucky, and Martin Behrman, of Louisiana, a former mayor of New Orleans. Their victory was celebrated in typical Klan fashion—by burning crosses and effigies of Smith in a New Jersey field.[1629]

1617 The Klan usually attacked whites for "moral" reasons such as suspected adultery, drunkenness, or idleness and rarely because they were ideological opponents. In fact, some of their white victims may have shared the Klan's political and racial perspectives.

1618 Stone, "West of Center," 259ff; Jackson, *Ku Klux Klan in the City*, 78. Ferguson once accused a political opponent of seeking the "nigger vote."

1619 Jackson, *Ku Klux Klan in the City*, 74.

1620 Stone, "West of Center," 263.

1621 Ibid., 260. Bryan Edward Stone claims that his examination of the Klan newspaper found no advertisements, indicating that the company may have made a straight donation to the terrorists. See also a similar incident in Goldberg, "Unmasking the Ku Klux Klan," 40.

1622 Stone, "West of Center," 261.

1623 Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas*, 57.

1624 Stone, "West of Center," 262, quotes Merfeld, whose comments are from the *Jewish Monitor*, 23 March 1923.

1625 Stone, "West of Center," 263, 266. Ferguson had proposed a bill to limit the rent landlords charged tenant farmers. As we have seen, many Jewish merchants derived income in this way and would have, no doubt, opposed such a bill. The law was passed but was soon after declared unconstitutional. See Ralph W. Steen, "James Edward Ferguson," *Handbook of Texas Online*, Jan. 17, 2008, Texas State Historical Association, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ffe5.html.

1626 Stone, "West of Center," 265, 268.

1627 Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism,* 46-47.

1628 Benjet, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Community," 138. See Stone, "West of Center," passim; Goldman, "Jewish Fringes Texas Fabric," passim.

1629 Postal, "Jews in the Ku Klux Klan," 60.

The Klan's Jewish "Policy"

While there was no hint of anti-Jewish rhetoric or activity in the original Reconstruction-era Ku Klux Klan, which had both Jewish members and Jewish financiers, the revived Klan, in the age of the 1915 mega-hit movie *Birth of a Nation* and the heightened nationalism inspired by World War I, added to its rhetoric a strain of criticism of Jewish behavior. None of this sporadic anti-Semitism ever moved beyond errant "whispers,"[1630] and certainly it never led to the lynchings and other violence Blacks faced with horrifying frequency. And even with this clear and growing antagonism, Jews are found living harmoniously with their neighbors in Klan strongholds.

Historian Morton Rosenstock wrote without qualification that "the Klan never formulated or consummated an explicit political program directed at Jews."[1631] And all of recorded history backs him in this remarkable assertion. The KKK, by its own formal oath instituted in its twentieth-century rebirth, does not explicitly threaten or target Jews, or practitioners of any other religious tradition for that matter. It states only that its membership is restricted to "native-born, White American citizens, who believe in the tenets of the Christian religion."

Further, the Klan implicitly characterizes Jews as allies by its next provision: "We avow the distinction between races of mankind…and we shall ever be true to the faithful maintenance of white supremacy..."[1632] Many prominent and lay Jews believed fully in this tenet of Klan faith and had stated as much openly and publicly, long before the Klan's existence. Their ardent and conspicuous defense of Black slavery, their prodigious involvement in the slave trade, their utter absence

from the abolitionist cause, and their unashamed overrepresentation in the Confederate Army constituted an impressive résumé of white supremacy that was admired and respected by all whites of good Southern breeding.

There were, however, many loosely affiliated splinter groups that emerged in the wake of the Klan's reincarnation, and a few of those engaged in some form of anti-Jewish rhetoric.[1633] Some surely were inspired by, or echoed the harangues of, the leading Jew-baiters like the industrialist Henry Ford or Father Charles Coughlin, and some adopted the Old World hatreds that were stirred up anew during the First World War. In some cases these remarks focused attention on the Jewish role in the American economy. Dallas-based Imperial Wizard Hiram Wesley Evans reiterated in a 1922 speech a common observation of the Jew as commercial middleman, when he asserted that

> Everywhere [the Jew] stands between the producer and the consumer and sweats the toil of the one and the necessity of the other for his gains.[1634]

At the same time, however, the Klan leader praised Jews as being "law abiding," "of physically wholesome stock," "untainted by immoralities among themselves," "mentally alert," and "a family people"—all qualities the Ku Klux Klan demagogues found specifically lacking in Blacks. According to Stone, "Evans's concern was not that Jews were inferior or unacceptable as part of American society." On the contrary, he faulted them "for failing to integrate *fully enough*, for remaining separate and self-protective."[1635] This kind of criticism of Jews with its implied invitation to better relations was fundamentally different from

the anti-Black vitriol Klan leaders endlessly spewed.

1630 Frost, *The Challenge of the Klan*, 150-51; John Higham, "Social Discrimination Against Jews in America, 1830-1930," *PAJHS* 47, no. 1 (Sept. 1957), 19 n. 64: "The Klan was almost everywhere more anti-Catholic than anti-Semitic, and its anti-Semitism was much stronger in the North than in the South." Also, John Higham, *Send These to Me: Jews and Other Immigrants in Urban America* (New York: Atheneum, 1975), 170.

1631 Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall,* 214.

1632 Jackson, *Ku Klux Klan in the City*, 23; Wyn Craig Wade, *The Fiery Cross: The Ku Klux Klan in America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 149; William Simmons, *America's Menace* (Atlanta, 1926), 47; Frost, *The Challenge of the Klan*, 54.

1633 In his book-length treatment of the history of American anti-Semitism, Leonard Dinnerstein lists groups and individuals he considers "anti-Semitic," but qualifies the Klan entry by using the phrase "*members* of the Ku Klux Klan" (emphasis ours), rather than labeling the organization itself as "anti-Semitic." His only additional statement on the KKK amounts to the unsupported, unreferenced sentence "The Ku Klux Klan, of course, did not like Jews." See his *Uneasy at Home: Antisemitism and the American Jewish Experience* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1987), 74, 257-58.

1634 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 144; Howard M. Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America* (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1993), 307, 450. Sachar does not report Evans's philo-Semitic comments. Also, Monteval, *The Klan Inside Out*, 171, states that the motivation for the Klan's anti-Jewish sentiment was the Jews' alleged "economic policy to control and dominate the trade and finances of the country," not the tenets of their faith.

1635 Emphasis ours. Stone, "West of Center," 224; Whitfield, "Jewish Fates, Altered States," 314; "75,000 Klansmen Gather in Dallas to Impress Nation," *NYT*, 25 Oct. 1923, 1. Evans also proposed a free national healthcare system for all citizens. See Jackson, *Ku Klux Klan in the City,* 77; "Ku Klux Klan," *UJE*, 6:482.

William J. Simmons on Blacks and Jews

William Joseph Simmons was the international voice of the reconstituted Ku Klux Klan. And as the self-proclaimed *Emperor of the Invisible Empire and Founder of the Ku Klux Klan*, Simmons claimed he could count his Jewish friends "by the score." There are, he said, "Catholics and Jews who are as devoutly loyal and true to our flag as any Protestant ever born on American soil." Imperial Wizard Evans also professed to have Jewish friends and both he and Simmons "sympathized with the plight of Jews in Europe."[1636]

Clearly, the KKK did not see Blacks and Jews as equals. That it differentiated between them can be seen in Simmons' book *The Klan Unmasked* (1923). Below for the purpose of comparison are Simmons' beliefs about Jews and his corresponding beliefs about the "Negro."

The Jew	The "Negro"
The whole way Jew has ever perhaps the most tenacious, the exclusive people in the world. The white man pride the pride of race and the pride of twelve years.	
They Negro in Africa is a child in the history of all their history. The Hebrew literature, the Hebrew religion, the Hebrew commonwealth, and more than all, the Hebrew jurisprudence, much of which has been adopted by our western society, entitles the race to hold to its distinctive qualities and characteristics with a pride that all the world respects and admires.	
The Negro patriotism in the world comparable to that of the Jew	**Perhaps the Negro is psychically, and hence morally, unfitted for its responsibilities. The cause here is biological. Democracy, we shall all agree, can not develop among the Australian bushmen….It will not develop, for a long time, among the African Negroes.**
He has been the victim of hospitality upon his part, and has been robbed and murdered by his own children	**The white man writes an honorable history in his treatment of the colored race, as to the millions of children for whose protection and care we are morally responsible,**

the sooner we shall all be placed upon solid ground.

Perhaps this Jew has understood for Negroes what some of our American biologists will not learn from biology; that is, that the amalgamation of two distinctive race types may lose, in the offspring, much of the distinctive good of both....To mix his blood with that of the Gentile is to lose his vision, his hope and his immortal soul.*

With the Negro on the political equality of the white man, with the injustice, toward racial segregation into the Negro as well. We can not justly enforce the laws among children that we make for adults. To enforce the white man's law, in all cases, upon the Negro is an injustice so great that the effort often causes sorrow to every normal mind among us.

Has equality and protection of Almighty God Negro's better qualities are developed and made evident by his works. But when he is burdened by moral and legal responsibilities which neither his mind nor his character is prepared to bear, in the vast majority of cases he breaks and falls under the load.

The ballot in the hands of the ignorant and vicious Khan geants of Negroes, and a policy which will prevent has grown to an Semitism flame, burning our hope of progress to ashes. Again force the ballot upon the southern Negro and we of the South will outdo the North in political failure and decay.**

The Negro is not yet prepared, then only on morality; in social the Jew is of ultimate with the Gentile.

We feel that the character of the native born American Negro has been formed from his early years by the influences which surround him. The Negro is not eligible to membership in the Klan nor will he become eligible as long as he remains a Negro. We have, not excluded the Jew. The Jew has excluded himself.

* Here, Simmons is suggesting that the Klan's own racial separatism is ideologically similar to that practiced by the Jews.

** See also Rice, *Ku Klux Klan in American Politics*, 31.

Although many may doubt the sincerity of any philo-Semitic sentiments expressed by these Ku Klux Klan leaders, it is significant that they would even *pretend* affection for Jews, given the impossibility that they would offer the same concessions in their views of Blacks. But whether genuine or not, no

Jew repudiated Simmons' or Evans's assertion of "friendship" or challenged or investigated the Klan leaders' associations with Jews. In fact, as this volume shows, many Jews—pillars of their communities and honored rabbis, businessmen, and Masons—sounded very much like Simmons on the race issue and commonly and publicly expressed similar sentiments. The December 8, 1922, issue of the Jewish-owned *New York Times* carried a full speech by Imperial Wizard Evans—something it would *never* do for enemies of the Jewish people.

The Klan has been labeled "anti-Semitic" because of their oath-bound belief in Christianity. Since practicing Jews did not meet this particular membership qualification, the various local Klan chapters were left to assume that Jews "probably ought to be treated as an enemy." This ideological vagueness on the "Jewish question" led to very localized interpretations of Jewish "policy." Some Klan chapters obviously practiced rhetorical anti-Semitism, while others specifically admitted Jews as members. The Klan's Texas chapter, for instance, admitted Jews as members "when they requested it."[1637]

In her study of Texas Jewry, Hollace Ava Weiner writes that "a number of Klansmen asked their leaders why the KKK was closed to Jews," they seeing no apparent conflict between Judaism and KKK principles. Rosenstock concurred that

> Even members of the Klan were sometimes distressed by the activities of their colleagues, feeling guilty, for example, at "picking on the Jews whom they had known as good neighbors all their lives."[1638]

The group's "imperial emperor" explained to thirty thousand Klan families at a community barbecue in Beaumont, Texas:

> Why not take the Jew? It would not be fair to...take in the Jew and take his money when the Jew cannot, following the beliefs of his fathers, accept Christ as the example as the Ku Klux Klan does. *I have some of my best friends in the Jews.*[1639]

Another Klan pontificator offered insight:

> Jesus Christ is the leader of the Ku Klux Klan, and we are for Him. The Jew is not for Him, and therefore the Jew has shut himself out of the Klan. We are not against the Negro. Rome fell because she mixed her blood. God Almighty has commanded us, "Thou shalt not mix thy blood"….We must protect American womanhood.[1640]

Here, in a sound bite, is the essential distinction in the Klan's approach to Blacks and Jews. The Jews are only denied membership for not believing in Jesus. Blacks, on the other hand, are denied membership because they have a particular intrinsic defect that bars them from attaining full-fledged humanity, though they are arguably the most devout believers in Jesus in all of Christendom.

Under the Klan's *moral* framework specific behaviors became targets of Klan violence: abortionists, bootleggers (Prohibition lasted from 1920 to 1933), race-mixers, pornographers, philanderers, home-wreckers, church non-attendees, and narcotics dealers were among those targeted by

the Klan.[1641] Also, the Klan's xenophobic promotion of "100 percent Americanism" made immigrants, foreigners, communists, and union organizers candidates for tar-and-feathering, whippings, and general policing—mostly because of these groups' potential to "stir up the nigrahs."[1642] In these categories Jews are found along with Christian whites and thus sometimes suffered Klan violence. Blacks became KKK targets for the crime of having an abundance of melanin.

Even after World War II, when the Klan rose again to combat the more strident freedom demands of returning Black veterans, Jews as a group were still not targeted. In fact, in the midst of Hitlerism in 1934, the Jews again found themselves in ideological harmony with the Klan when the terrorist organization attacked Fascism and Nazism as dangerous to America and continued to invite Jews to join.[1643] Throughout the era, Jews enjoyed the goodwill and respect of Christian whites in Klan strongholds. Their stores and businesses were unassailed and peacefully patronized; their synagogues and community centers were safe and secure; and their people were accepted at every level of Southern society. Even the most virulent racists like Theodore G. Bilbo were careful to convey their reverence for Jews whenever the suggestion of "anti-Semitism" arose. "I'm for every damned Jew from Jesus Christ on down," the Mississippi senator publicly stated.[1644] There was no such immunity for the Black man, ever.

Other whites were far more likely than Jews to suffer Klan attacks. Dr. Clive Webb found that statistically Jews had less to fear from mob violence than did Sicilians, a group that is never generally thought of as a Klan target.[1645] Between 1886 and 1910, lynch mobs murdered 29 Sicilians and

countless immigrants from China, Japan, Austria-Hungary, Mexico, Great Britain, and even Switzerland, *but not a single Jew*.[1646]

For their supposed allegiance to a "foreign power"—the Pope—Catholics were most often targeted for their religious beliefs.[1647] In Atlanta, the Klan forced the school board to discharge a teacher solely because she was a Catholic. But it made no efforts to have Jewish teachers dismissed, and the Jewish high school principal was not bothered.[1648] Similarly, in Dallas the Klan newspaper explained that it did not approve of Catholics teaching in public schools but explicitly stated that it had no problem with Jewish teachers.[1649]

Jews had a history of their own anti-Catholicism, even before the original Ku Klux Klan had formed in Tennessee in 1865. Dr. Harold Brackman wrote that "New York Jews enthusiastically attended Know Nothing rallies called to protest 'the threat' of Catholic political power in the United States…" Brackman explains that

> many Jewish immigrants probably would have succumbed to the temptation to settle Old World scores and at the same time demonstrate their "Americanism" by echoing the anti-Catholicism of the native Protestant majority.[1650]

Generally, Jews were not the target of the Ku Klux Klan, and the racial violence for which the Klan is known was never visited upon the Jews in America, who by and large did not view the Klan phenomenon as a threat. Eli N. Evans, the poet laureate of the Jewish South, probably expressed it best: "Of course there was a Klan element….It was

there, but my feelings were not ones of fear and hatred."[1651]

For many Jews the "new" Ku Klux Klan revival of 1915 to 1930 did not represent any more of a threat to their existence or to their acceptance into Southern society than did the original nightriders. It was to them a superfluous and misguided organization of vigilantes, not an "anti-Semitic" one.[1652] The Klan's original purpose and function as the military arm of American white supremacy were "noble" ones, necessary to maintaining racial order, as Jews like Memphis rabbi William Fineshriber certainly believed. As Jewish writer Bernard Postal wrote, "When the South had been properly 'reconstructed' and made safe for the Democratic party, *and the Negro put in his place*, the Ku Klux Klan died a natural death."[1653]

But now the "new Klan" had lost its original righteous objective and become an uncontrollable vigilante force of the disgruntled lower class. What's more, Jim Crow was now institutionalized and firmly in place; the Klan credo had been triumphantly fixed in custom *and* in law. The state and federal "justice systems" had, for the most part, taken over the bloody business of lynchings when they institutionalized them as "executions";[1654] the forced labor, or convict-leasing, system was efficiently re-enslaving Black male youth; widespread enactment of disfranchisement laws coupled with violence had dissuaded Blacks from voting and other political activity; and the labor movement had successfully rerouted Blacks back into the cottonfields. Clearly, the white racial consciousness of the Ku Klux Klan had been deeply rooted in America and all its institutions.

1636 Simmons, *America's Menace*, 32; Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall,* 204.

1637 Stone, "West of Center," 252 n. 93. Rice, *Ku Klux Klan in American Politics*, 132 n. 2: a pro-Klan pamphlet states "any Jew can belong if he believes in the divinity of Christ, any Catholic if he can fulfill the obligations of membership."

1638 Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall,* 213. See similar sentiment expressed in "Klan Has Hard Time In South Carolina," *NYT*, 19 Nov. 1923, 17.

1639 Emphasis ours. Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas*, 31.

1640 Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929), 483; Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall,* 204.

1641 See, for example, Ellsworth, *Death in a Promised Land*, 102-3. Ellsworth speaks of a Tulsa Jew named Nathan Hantaman, who, in 1923, was suspected of narcotics dealing and was released by authorities to the Klan apparently by prearrangement. He was taken out of town, "stripped, whipped, and his genitals beaten to a pulp." Ironically, it was *this* incident—and not the many attacks upon Blacks in Tulsa, including the murderous white riot of 1921 that slaughtered as many as 300 innocent Blacks (ibid., 69)—that "became the catalyst" for the Oklahoma governor to initiate a "war" on the Ku Klux Klan. See also Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism,* 52. Kellam, "The Mind of an Anti-Semite," 23, describes the "Klan" beating of a Jewish plumbing contractor in 1927. When the culprits were found, one turned out to be a business rival. Also Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas,* 29; Alexander, *Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest*, 23. In the case of Hantaman, see Alexander, *Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest,* 142-43. Concerning other allegedly dissolute whites and Jews, see Rice, *Ku Klux Klan in American Politics*, 26.

1642 Elovitz (*Century of Jewish Life in Dixie,* 86) offers a concise list of Klan targets in Birmingham: "(a) Negro, (b) Catholic, (c) an immigrant, (d) or an idle boozer." Also, Weiner, *Jewish Stars in Texas*, 29.

1643 Shankman, "Atlanta Jewry," 151; Simmons, *The Klan Unmasked* (Atlanta, 1923), 58-68, 147-68; Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall,* 205-6. On comparisons between Nazism and Ku Kluxism, see Lunabelle Wedlock, "Comparisons by Negro Publications of the Plight of the Jews in Germany with that of the Negro in America," in *Strangers and Neighbors*, 434-35. Also, a faction of the Klan had established a unit in Germany in 1925, and Hitler was said to be sympathetic toward Klan ideology. See Johnpeter Horst Grill and Robert L. Jenkins, "The Nazis and the American South in the 1930s: A Mirror Image?" *JSoHis* 58, no. 4 (Nov. 1992): 671.

1644 James C. Cobb, ed., *The Mississippi Delta and the World: The Memoirs of David L. Cohn* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1995), 47.

1645 Clive Webb, "The Lynching of Sicilian Immigrants in the American South, 1886-1910," *American Nineteenth Century History* 3, no. 1 (spring 2002): 46. Webb says, "mob violence against Sicilians is of considerably more significance" than any violent action against Jews. Mormons were also much more likely than Jews to suffer violence. See Mason, "Anti-Jewish Violence in the New South," 107,

118, n. 77, 78. Still, the lynchings of Blacks far exceeded those of immigrants by a factor of 75 to 1, or more. David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 106.

1646 Webb, "Lynching of Sicilian Immigrants," 45.

1647 David L. Cohn, a Jew, recounted a Klan meeting in 1920s Mississippi where the organizer had railed against Catholics, but not Jews. Cobb, *Mississippi Delta and the World*, 176. Also, Catholics were seen by some Southerners to be more accepting of Blacks than were whites of other religions. See Frank Bohn, "The Ku Klux Klan Interpreted," *American Journal of Sociology* 30, no. 4 (Jan. 1925): 386-87, 388.

1648 Shankman, "Atlanta Jewry," 151.

1649 Benjet, "The Ku Klux Klan and the Jewish Community," 140. The same newspaper claimed Jews were "klannish," which may be interpreted (by the use of the "k") as a distinctly KKK *kompliment*. The Klan often replaced the letter *c* with a *k* in order to show unity or agreement with Klan ideology. Thus, a political *kandidate* was seen as supportive of the group's aims, and so forth.

1650 Harold D. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of Black-Jewish Relations Through 1900, Part 1" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1977), 253.

1651 Eli N. Evans, *The Lonely Days Were Sundays: Reflections of a Jewish Southerner* (Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1993), 33.

1652 This view was certainly held by the most prominent Jewish leader, constitutional attorney Louis Marshall. See Rosenstock, *Louis Marshall,* 208, 211; Reznikoff, *Louis Marshall*, 389-90; "Ku Klux Klan," *UJE*, 6:481; Cruse, *Plural But Equal*, 119; Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism," 32-33.

1653 Emphasis ours. Postal, "Jews in the Ku Klux Klan," 60.

1654 Charles David Phillips, "Exploring Relations among Forms of Social Control: The Lynching and Execution of Blacks in North Carolina, 1889-1918," *Law & Society Review* 21, no. 3 (1987): 361-374. Also, as the sociologist John Dollard wrote in *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937; reprint, London: Routledge Thoemmes Press, 1998), 314, after his research in a Mississippi town, "whites do not fight for social superiority just for fun; on the contrary, they are attempting to minimize or eliminate Negro Competition." The weapons used in the battle, according to Dollard, included both lynching and "white control of formal force, the police, sheriffs, justices of the peace, judges, and juries." Ibid., 332.

See James W. Clarke, "Without Fear or Shame: Lynching, Capital Punishment and the Subculture of Violence in the American South," *British Journal of Political Science* 28, no. 2 (April 1998): 284-85. Between 1882 and 1930, 1,977 Blacks were "legally" murdered by the government, "an average of 40 executions" a year, while only 451 whites were executed in that same time. See Stewart Emory Tolnay and E. M. Beck, *A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1995), 100-101; Stewart E. Tolnay, E. M. Beck, and James L. Massey, "Black Competition and White Vengeance: Legal Execution of Blacks as Social Control in the Cotton South, 1890 to 1929," *Social Science*

Quarterly 73, no. 3 (Sept. 1992): 628, 630, 640-42, and passim; Christopher Waldrep, "Substituting Law for the Lash: Emancipation and Legal Formalism in a Mississippi County Court," *JAH* 82, no. 4 (March 1996): 1425-51.

How Jewish Scholars See the Klan "Threat"

A striking phenomenon in the study of American Jewish history is the relative insignificance that Jewish scholars have assigned to the Ku Klux Klan. The terrorist group that has become the very epitome of white American racism, defiance, and brutality is almost completely absent from their analyses of actual threats either to individual Jews or to Jewish progress.

One of the most popular histories of the American Jewish experience, *World of Our Fathers* by Irving Howe, does not mention the Klan at all in all of its hefty 714 pages.[1655] Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, "the dean of American Jewish historians" and the "undisputed father of the field,"[1656] mentions the Ku Klux Klan in his *American Jew*, but discounts their significance, claiming only that "in some areas [they] made life miserable for individual Jews." Rabbi Marcus admits later in the book that "[q]uite indirectly" American Jews "became involved with white supremacist Klan groups," but he discusses the issue no further.[1657] Another respected rabbi and historian dealing with the overall history of American Jews, Abraham J. Karp, does not mention the Klan in his 1985 book *Haven and Home*.[1658]

In the 1,051 pages of his *History of the Jews in America*, Howard M. Sachar mentions the Klan five times and concludes that by the late twenties (when Black lynchings were at biblical proportions) the Klan "had largely shifted away from Jew-baiting" and was "all but moribund" during the mid-twentieth century, reviving later, but on "the fringes of American life."[1659] No more elaboration accompanies these minor references by the distinguished Harvard and Brandeis professor.

Several books that deal specifically with the history of Blacks and Jews are equally devoid of detail on the supposed seriousness of the Klan peril to Jews.[1660] Jewish Harvard professors Oscar and Mary Handlin distinguish between the old and new Ku Klux Klan, stating that the latter "were confused and uncertain about their practical political objectives…[and] had no defined aims." And, they add, despite "all this agitation and activity through the 1920's [the Ku Klux Klan] *left no significant anti-Semitic imprint upon American legislation or political practice*..."[1661]

Authoritative regional Jewish histories, like Steven Hertzberg's *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845-1915*, mention the Klan as only a vague annoyance, even though the Klan was revived in Atlanta in 1915.[1662] Books that deal specifically with "anti-Semitism" are no different in this respect. Phyllis Chesler's recent work *The New Anti-Semitism* mentions the Klan twice—once in a list of several "Right-wing, white-supremacy groups" and then as part of "a Jewish joke," which she says is told among Jews.[1663] David A. Gerber, editor of *Anti-Semitism in American History*, seems to shrug off the Klan as being no more than an ideological nuisance.[1664] In Ron Rosenbaum's collection of writings on "The Question of Anti-Semitism," the Klan is mentioned only twice as passing references by only two of the fifty-one mostly Jewish writers.[1665] Marvin Perry and Frederick M. Schweitzer studied anti-Semitism "from Antiquity to the Present," yet in their review of "threats" to Jewish Americans the Ku Klux Klan earned less than a full sentence. Curiously, they thought the actions of Black Americans merited an entire chapter.[1666]

Of the three major encyclopedias of Jewish

history, only one has an entry for the "Ku Klux Klan." And that one, the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* (1942), states categorically that the original Klan "was not anti-Jewish" and surmises that "it is within the realm of possibility" that "there were Jewish Klansmen in the 1860's." While this encyclopedia asserts that the revived Klan was "anti-Semitic," it also states: "Overt actions against Jewish individuals were not common" and "anti-Semitism was only a minor point" in the Klan's literature.[1667] Frederic Cople Jaher scoured the country to find any incident where a Jew might have felt the least bit uncomfortable under any circumstances, yet he hardly mentions the Ku Klux Klan.[1668] The Southern Jewish writer Harry Golden wrote that even the dreaded cross burnings "never affected the core of the American Jewish community…"[1669]

An academic publication covering Jewish history carried the following statement: "To be sure, the Southern Klansmen were far less anti-Semitic than they were anti-Negro and anti-Catholic." It went on to discuss the case of a North Carolina Jew who was invited to join the Klan. When the same article was reprinted in a popular Jewish publication meant for a lay Jewish and Gentile readership, the paragraph discussing this Southern Jew's Klan-friendly relationship was edited out of the article. The Jewish editors obviously believed that these racist affiliations would be disquieting to the reading public.[1670]

On the other end of the spectrum, the affectionately written Klan biography by Stanley F. Horn, *Invisible Empire* (1939), has no index entry for "Jews," suggesting that they were an insignificant element of Klan ideology or Klan activities. Most book-length treatments of the Klan similarly regard

Jews as irrelevant in the Klan's history.

Beyond what contemporary Jewish informants have testified to, trained Jewish historians have made extraordinary statements refuting the common notion about the relationship between Jews and the Ku Klux Klan. Dr. Clive Webb wrote that in 1920s Arkansas, there was a "spirit of détente" between Jews and America's most notorious serial lynchers. He marveled at the "lack of enmity many Klansmen held towards southern Jews." For the Jews of the South, he continued, "the Klan of the 1920s was never a serious source of concern."[1671]

And there is much testimony like that of historian John Higham, who observed that the Southern Klan "was considerably less anti-Semitic than in the North."[1672] Oscar R. Williams wrote of the "Jewish acceptance by the Ku Klux Klan and later Jewish participation in the White Citizens Council" as matters of indisputable fact.[1673]

1655 Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Touchstone, 1976).

1656 Gary P. Zola, "Why Study Southern Jewish History?" *SJH* 1 (1998): 4.

1657 Jacob Rader Marcus, *The American Jew, 1585-1990: A History* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1995), 148-49, 306-7.

1658 Abraham J. Karp, *Haven and Home: A History of the Jews in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1985).

1659 Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America*, 450, 791.

1660 *African Americans and Jews in the Twentieth Century: Studies in Convergence and Conflict,* eds. V. P. Franklin et al. (Columbia, MO: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1998), for instance, carries no real specifics, and only a few gratuitous mentions, in its fifteen articles. The twenty articles in *Blacks and Jews: Alliances and Arguments,* ed. Paul Berman (New York: Delacorte Press, 1994) make no mention of the Ku Klux Klan.

1661 Emphasis ours. Oscar Handlin and Mary F. Handlin, "The Acquisition of Political and Social Rights by the Jews in the United States," in *American Jewish Yearbook,* vol. 56 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1955), 82.

1662 Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City*. Rabbi Leo E. Turitz and Evelyn Turitz cover the entire history of the Jews in Mississippi

in *Jews in Early Mississippi* (1983; reprint, Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1995) but make no mention of the Ku Klux Klan.

1663 Phyllis Chesler, *The New Anti-Semitism: The Current Crisis and What We Must Do About It* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 137, 218.

1664 David A. Gerber, ed., *Anti-Semitism in American History* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1986).

1665 Ron Rosenbaum, ed., *Those Who Forget the Past: The Question of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Random House, 2004), 359, 476.

1666 Marvin Perry and Frederick M. Schweitzer, *Antisemitism: Myth and Hate from Antiquity to the Present* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). Similarly, the first 63 pages of a book by former New York City mayor Edward I. Koch are about "black anti-Semitism," with only ancillary references to the KKK. *The Koch Papers: My Fight Against Anti-Semitism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

1667 "Ku Klux Klan," *UJE* (1942), 6:479-81. The *JEncy* (1910) and the *EJ* (1972) have no "Ku Klux Klan" entry.

1668 Frederic Cople Jaher, *A Scapegoat in the New Wilderness: The Origins and Rise of Anti-Semitism in Americ*a (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1994), 242-43, 244, 246.

1669 Golden, *Our Southern Landsman*, 59, 237.

1670 Morrison, "A Southern Philo-Semite," 86. The offending paragraph was left out of Joseph L. Morrison, "The South's Greatest Philo-Semite: Josephus Daniels of North Carolina," *Jewish Digest,* Aug. 1964, 5-12.

1671 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 147.

1672 Ibid., 144.

1673 Oscar R. Williams, Jr., "Historical Impressions of Black-Jewish Relations prior to World War II," in *Strangers and Neighbors,* 36. See Morris U. Schappes's attempt to refute this claim (p. 46), and Oscar R. Williams' rejoinder (pp. 48-49), where he chastises Schappes's sloppiness and decries his attempt to intimidate the Black publisher (*Negro History Bulletin*) that originally published both articles.

Jewish Support for Black Lynching

[I] t is a fact that some of the most rabid anti-Negro Southerners that I have met during my life have been Jews.

—

Oswald
Garrison
Villard,
NAACP

At about the end of slavery, white America began to engage more frequently in a monstrous form of public homicide called lynching. This ritualized community murder masqueraded as "crime fighting" but was actually a three-part strategy to instill terror into the hearts and minds of the Black population, eliminate economically successful, politically active Blacks, and reinforce Black people's role as plantation laborers.[1674] For, as W.E.B. Du Bois stated,

> there was one thing that the white South feared more than negro dishonesty, ignorance, and incompetency, and that was negro honesty, knowledge, and efficiency.[1675]

All throughout slavery, this kind of communal sadism was reserved by whites for extraordinary circumstances—such as when Africans revolted or

were found plotting escape—given that Blacks as property were just too valuable to murder recreationally. But upon "emancipation" Blacks could be destroyed without necessarily harming a white man's personal wealth, so lynching—a uniquely American invention—became increasingly popular and widespread.

In the period from 1882 to 1927, at least 4,951 persons were lynched in the United States, the overwhelming majority of lynchings occurring in the Southern states. Of these, 3,513 were Blacks, including 76 Black women, and many victims were so mutilated that their remains were not even identifiable. If, as one commentator wrote, "lynching is an exact measure of the ratio of barbarism lingering in any community,"[1676] the United States of America was still deep in the Dark Ages.[1677]

American lynchings were community-wide events, much anticipated like a carnival or a country fair, and officially sanctioned. They were no less than Caucasian celebrations, public bondings across class and ethnic lines,[1678] with veteran lynchers egging on the younger ones, women inciting their men to horrific cruelty, and children cheering on the medieval proceedings, as all reveled *as one* in the dreadful tortures inflicted upon Black men, women, and children. White women dressed up in their Sunday finery, white men chartered trains, and newspapers announced the event *in advance*.[1679] The smiling faces in the photographs of the spectators, one scholar points out, "are not the faces of people who have seen justice fulfilled, but rather the faces of those who have experienced a pleasurable event."[1680] For lynchings had nothing to do with justice. The victims were typically Blacks who had "offended"

some actual or imaginary provision of the ludicrous "black codes," like owning land, operating a business, being educated, or simply assuming to be a free man or woman.[1681] As the *Boston Transcript* described it,

> These men are out for sport. It matters little whether the negro is guilty or innocent. A suspicion does as well as a proven fact. Almost any excuse will do that will serve as a rallying cry with which to organize pursuit of the human game.[1682]

By 1900, these uninvestigated homicides against Blacks had reached the rate of 100 a year. The habitual bloodletting in a racist society may have served the cathartic needs of the white rank and file,[1683] but the civic necessity for the bloody spectacle was outlined by University of Alabama professor Clarence Cason:

> [T]his conviction that the black man must now and then be intimidated, in order to keep him from forgetting the bounds which southern traditions have set for him, is firmly rooted in the consciousness of many southern people. So unquestioned is this philosophy that at times lynchings are planned and carried through—not under the fierce compulsion of mob hysteria—[but] by men who have calmly resigned themselves to the performance of a painful duty, which, according to their lights, is necessary for the good of society.[1684]

Similarly, historian Robert Zangrando did not see Black criminality or Black sexual lust at the root of lynching, concluding instead that "Lynching was a means to intimidate, degrade, and control black people throughout the southern and border states, from Reconstruction to the mid-twentieth century."[1685]

A Black man in Paris, Texas, had his eyes gouged out with a red-hot poker before being burned to death. A Black man in Arkansas was chained to a log and "cooked" slowly to death over a carefully prepared fire made with piles of dampened leaves. When the Black man grasped for hot ashes to swallow to try to end his own life, his white executioners kicked the coals out of his reach. Before his body cooled, whites scrambled to claim pieces of his charred remains. In other instances the victims' teeth were pulled out one by one, fingers and toes pulled, twisted, chopped, or snapped off; and jackknife castrations performed with diabolical deftness were part of the *pre-death* rituals.[1686] In Newnan, Georgia, in 1899, a mob of 2,000 whites suspended Sam Holt from a tree limb, after they had removed his clothes and wound a heavy chain around his body. The local press reported what happened next:

> Before the torch was applied to the pyre, the negro was deprived of his ears, fingers, and genital parts of his body. He pleaded pitifully for his life while the mutilation was going on, but stood the ordeal of the fire with surprising fortitude. Before the body was cool, it was cut to pieces, the bones were crushed into small bits, and even the tree upon which the wretch met his fate was torn up and disposed of as "souvenirs."

> The negro's heart was cut into several pieces, as was also his liver.[1687]

No studies of Jewish American history even mention these atrocities, which frequently occurred in places where Jews served as community leaders and elected officials. According to Jewish historian Philip S. Foner, by the turn of the century Blacks had become "increasingly disappointed and resentful that Jews…appeared to be indifferent to the mounting persecution of blacks." He continues:

> Unfortunately, little aid came from the Jewish community or press…as blacks continued to be legally disenfranchised, pushed more deeply into a segregated society, and met by an orgy of lynchings and anti-Negro riots in the South (and sometimes even in the North) when they protested.

Foner's examination of the files of Jewish newspapers, both English- and Yiddish-language, during the opening years of the twentieth century "reveals little attention to the Negro question."[1688]

Instead, prominent Jews were most often heard publicly supporting the lynching of Blacks; in fact, some of this Jewish enmity had been evident in the time of slavery. The Denmark Vesey "conspiracy" of 1822 in Charleston elicited no Jewish support for the Black freedom fighters. According to Jewish historian Gary P. Zola, "Jews seemed, if anything, more spirited than their neighbors in their attack on the rebellious slaves." Two of the city's five newspapers had Jewish editors, and the idea that Blacks might fight for their freedom outraged both of them. Isaac Harby "approved heartily" of the mass executions of 37 Blacks, and called the

"conspiracy" one of the "most awful" since the settlement of Charleston. It was "a scheme of wildness and wickedness, enough to make us… shudder..." Of the executions he said, "the axe has been laid to the root of the evil." He used the incident to denounce the meddling of abolitionists and to demand harsher slave laws. When the abolitionists used the Bible to advocate for "liberty and equality," he thought it only served "to sanction deeds of darkness." Charleston's other Jewish editor, Jacob N. Cardozo, of the *Southern Patriot,* felt similarly.[1689] Jewish slave-owner Rachel Mordecai considered the freedom-fighters of the great 1831 Nat Turner Rebellion "lawless wretches."[1690]

After slavery's legal end, Jews maintained their position on "the Negro question." In 1873, a German Jewish peddler named Jacob Kriss was murdered by unknown assailants in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Three innocent Blacks were lynched in retaliation for the crime. The Jewish press, in perfect accord with the prevailing community standards, praised the terrorists, even prescribing that "*it is perhaps permissible, in the interests of personal security, even to prefer lynching*."[1691]

The *Israelite* newspaper in May 1873 also accepted the verdict of the white mob and reported that "a gang of three black men" were "executed by the excited multitude." The *Israelite*, was, however, anxious to assert that "to our knowledge, the Jews of Baton Rouge had nothing to do with the lynch justice."[1692] Jews like Frank Cohen, editor of the *Jewish Sentiment*, voiced their opinion of the gory American lynching tradition. Cohen commented in 1898:

> [T]he white man is not only superior to

> the black man, but will assert his supremacy at the proper time and in the proper manner.…[1693]

It appears that Cohen did indeed represent the Jewish sentiment on the issue. Two weeks later he wrote:

> North Carolina has recently done herself proud while several other states have had dignified hanging bees [lynching parties] —provoked by the usual cause.…Those negroes who conduct themselves properly, are respected and protected, but the lawless brute who violates the sanctity of the white man's home deserves death and usually receives it with electrical swiftness.[1694]

And again on August 11, 1899:

> The primary needs of the negro race is [sic] obedience to the law and recognition of the rights of others.…If the unmentionable crime against womanhood is persisted in[,] mobs in the future will deal with him as they have in the past.[1695]

The fact is such horrific violence is described in exacting detail in the Jewish holy book Talmud. Grotesque public murders took place under Jewish rule in Babylonia under the guise of justice. But whereas the Southern violence was more often improvised and random, the ancient rabbis actually "prescribed" the way to carry out their form of Jewish justice—a method that was eerily similar to the tragedies that befell many Black Americans.

According to the Talmud:

> The manner in which burning is executed is as follows: He who had been thus condemned was lowered into dung up to his armpits; then a hard cloth was placed within a soft one, wound round his neck, and the two loose ends pulled in opposite directions, forcing him to open his mouth. A wick was then lit, and thrown into his mouth, so that it descended into his body and burnt his bowels. R[abbi] Judah said: Should he however have died at their hands [being strangled by the bandage before the wick was thrown into his mouth, or before it could act], he would not have been executed by fire as prescribed. Hence it was done thus: His mouth was forced open with pincers against his wish, the wick lit and thrown into his mouth, so that it descended into his body and burnt his bowels.[1696]

In the South, lynchings took place almost casually at the rate of more than two a week during the first decade of the 20th century.[1697] Jews shared in these sickening "pleasures" along with their white compatriots—their attitudes and behaviors indistinguishable from those of other whites. In 1937, the Friedman family gathered in Birmingham for the *Bar mitzvah* celebration of Karl B. Friedman. Karl relates how his family viewed a lynching:

> My father invited his sisters and brothers who came for the Bar Mitzvah to view a Saturday night lynching in downtown Birmingham. Some were willing. Some were appalled. All believed that it was

going to happen.[1698]

In 1910, Dallas whites lynched a Black man, hanging him from a tree. Edgar Goldberg wrote an editorial for the *Jewish Herald* that, according to one scholar, "could have come from many Southern papers of the day." Defending the terrorists, Goldberg wrote:

> The sanctity of the home to our Southern citizens…is superior to the law….The people make the laws and the people can suspend the laws….Each section has conditions to contend with that can not be governed to suit the like or dislike of the other section. The South is well able to take care of its own notwithstanding the comments of our Northern contemporaries.[1699]

1674 Tolnay and Beck, *A Festival of Violence*, 255-56, state: "lynching was an integral element of an agricultural economy that required a large, cheap, and docile labor force." Also, ibid., 25, 70.

1675 W.E.B. Du Bois, "Reconstruction and Its Benefits," *American Historical Review* 15, no. 4 (July 1910): 795; Walter White, *Rope and Faggot: A Biography of Judge Lynch* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 97.

1676 "Lynching and Civilization," *NYT*, 24 Jan. 1898, 6.

1677 A generally accepted definition of lynching is "Any assemblage of three or more persons which shall exercise or attempt to exercise by physical violence and without authority of law any power of correction or punishment over any person..." Many Blacks, however, were murdered under circumstances outside this definition. The "authority of law" in America was as fair to Blacks as Hitler's was to Jews, and operated as no more than an un-hooded lynch mob. These government-sponsored murders are nonetheless unrepresented in most lists of lynching statistics. Other lynchings occurred as isolated, unreported murders, murders by one or two perpetrators, rape/murders, medical experimentation, forced-labor camp deaths, or by other means. While search parties were dragging the swamps and rivers for the missing civil rights activists Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, and James Chaney in 1964, they discovered other bodies floating in the Mississippi River.

Also, lynching statistics are rarely accurate and are often gleaned

from reports by the perpetrators. The collected data on lynching begin with the unofficial efforts of the *Chicago Tribune* in 1882, *after* possibly the bloodiest era of racial violence in American history. Tuskegee Institute began keeping independent records in 1892 and the NAACP in 1912, but these three sources often differ. A 2015 study titled "Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror," by the Equal Justice Initiative, documents 3,959 lynchings of Blacks between 1877 and 1950—at least 700 more than previously reported. The study of lynching also ignores the ongoing holocaust against the Native Americans, who were being dispossessed of their lives and land as a matter of official government policy.

Lastly, the mass murders committed by rampaging whites during their many racially motivated riots are unaccounted for in lynching statistics. From the post–Civil War era through the post–World War I era, there were at least 36 such riots in America, in which hundreds of Blacks were murdered. See Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *On Lynchings: Southern Horrors, A Red Record, Mob Rule in New Orleans* (New York: Arno Press, 1969); W. Fitzhugh Brundage, ed., *Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1997); James Allen, *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America* (Santa Fe: Twin Palms, 2000); Richard Maxwell Brown, *Strain of Violence: Historical Studies of American Violence and Vigilantism* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1975), 205-12, 320-26 (appendix 4).

1678 Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), 236.

1679 In 1934, the NAACP collected American newspaper headlines showing premeditation (and apparent approval by government authorities) of lynchings, not spontaneous, unrestrained emotional outbursts of vigilante violence: "White Folks Invited to a Hanging Bee," "Crowd Awaits Lynching," "Mob Holds Negro: Invitations Issued for Lynch Party," "Thousands in Throng to See FL Mob Murder Negro," "Countryside Invited to Negro's Lynching," "Hundreds Headed for a Lynching," "Mob Invites 'White Folks' to Lynching," "Mob Plans Fiery Death for Killer: National Guard May Be Called."

1680 Clyde Taylor, "The Re-Birth of the Aesthetic in Cinema," in *The Birth of Whiteness: Race and the Emergence of U.S. Cinema*, ed. Daniel Bernardi (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1996), 28. At one particularly vicious lynching, "the total crowd was almost half female"; in another the mob was led by a white woman. See Sig Synnestvedt, *The White Response to Black Emancipation: Second-Class Citizenship in the United States Since Reconstruction* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 65, 63. Also see The Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad, *The True History of Master Fard Muhammad* (Atlanta: Secretarius Publications, 1996), 101.

1681 Wells-Barnett, *On Lynchings*. Also, Wayne K. Durrill, "The South Carolina Black Code," in *True Stories From the American Past,* ed. William Graebner (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 10.

1682 "What the Press and People Say about the Lynchings in Georgia," *AC*, 25 April 1899, 3.

1683 See John Roach, "Bullies' Brains Light Up With Pleasure as People Squirm," *National Geographic News,* November 7, 2008, National Geographic Society, http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2008/11/081107-bully-brain.html.

1684 Clarence Cason, *Ninety Degrees in the Shade* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1935), 111. This sentiment was also expressed by Sheriff W.H. Furlough of Calhoun County, Arkansas, who asserted that innocent Blacks were "hung sort of on general principles….We kill five or six of them every year, and that makes the others behave tolerabl[y] well." See "Topics of the Times," *NYT,* 15 Aug. 1899, 6. Also, John C. Willis, *Forgotten Time: The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta After the Civil War* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 2000), 28.

1685 Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1980), 3.

1686 Irving Kovarsky and William Albrecht, *Black Employment: The Impact of Religion, Economic Theory, Politics, and Law* (Ames, IA: Iowa State Univ. Press, 1970), 45.

1687 Ginzburg, *One Hundred Years of Lynchings*, 12-15. The 1916 lynching of 17-year-old Jesse Washington in Waco, Texas, was a similarly bestial public murder, attended by 10,000 whites. Among the first to seize the boy was deputy sheriff Barney Goldberg. See Patricia Bernstein, *The First Waco Horror: The Lynching of Jesse Washington and the Rise of the NAACP* (College Station: Texas A&M Univ. Press, 2005).

1688 Philip S. Foner, "Black-Jewish Relations in the Opening Years of the Twentieth Century," *Phylon* 36, no. 4 (winter 1975): 361-62.

1689 Gary P. Zola, *Isaac Harby of Charleston, 1788-1828* (Tuscaloosa, AL: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1994), 95-98; Theodore Rosengarten and Dale Rosengarten, *A Portion of the People: Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life* (Columbia, SC: McKissick Museum, 2002), 13; Allen Kaufman, *Capitalism, Slavery, and Republican Values: Antebellum Political Economists, 1819-1848* (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1982), 132; Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg, eds., *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 2006), 5.

1690 Emily Bingham, "American, Jewish, Southern, Mordecai: Constructing Identities To 1865," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 56-57. Also, Leonard Rogoff, *Down Home: Jewish Life in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2010), 30; Robert N. Rosen, "Jewish Confederates," in *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil*, 111; Emily Bingham, "Thou Knowest Not What a Day May Bring Forth: Intellect, Power, Conversion, and Apostasy in the Life of Rachel Mordecai Lazarus (1788-1838)," in *Religion in the American South: Protestants and Others in History and Culture,* eds. Beth Barton Schweiger and Donald G. Mathews (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2004), 67-98, esp. 75, 86, 93 n. 32. Jewish Northerner Marcus Spiegel felt similarly. See Marcus M. Spiegel, *Your True Marcus: The Civil War Letters of a Jewish Colonel,* eds. Frank L. Byrne and Jean P. Soman (Kent, OH: Kent State Univ. Press, 1985), 8-9, 204. Concerning the Jews of Charleston, see Stephen M.

Passamaneck, "Morris Goldsmith: Deputy United States Marshal," *AJA* 46, no. 1 (spring/summer 1994), passim and 67-68: "What better place for a young and eager Jewish boy to establish his own roots in a vigorous new society?" See also *Jews Selling Blacks* (Chicago: Nation of Islam, 2010), 5-6, 8, passim.

1691 Emphasis ours. Rudolf Glanz, "Notes on Early Jewish Peddling in America," *Jewish Social Studies* 7 (1945): 129. Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict," 274, is referring to the same case when he wrote that "an itinerant Jew was robbed and murdered by three black plantation hands who, in turn, were lynched." Brackman unquestioningly accepts the verdict of the lynch mob. Blacks were commonly framed, scapegoated, and lynched without a trace of due process—as in this case.

1692 Webb, "A History of Black-Jewish Relations," 105.

1693 Steven Hertzberg, "The Jewish Community of Atlanta: From the End of the Civil War until the Eve of the Frank Case," *AJHQ* 62, no. 3 (March 1973): 280-81; *Jewish Sentiment*, 31 Dec. 1897, 3; 24 Aug. 1900, 3; 28 Oct. 1898, 3.

1694 Hertzberg, "The Jewish Community of Atlanta," 281; *Jewish Sentiment*, 11 Nov. 1898, 3. The great anti-lynching crusader and journalist Ida B. Wells debunked the "Black rape" myth in several of her writings. See Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *On Lynchings: Southern Horrors, A Red Record, Mob Rule in New Orleans* (New York: Arno Press, 1969); Ida B. Wells-Barnett, "Lynch Law in America," *Arena,* Jan. 1900, 15-24; "Document: Ida B. Wells-Barnett: Lynching and the Excuse for It," *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, http://www.britannica.com.

1695 Hertzberg, "The Jewish Community of Atlanta," 281; *Jewish Sentiment*, 11 Aug. 1899, 3. There is nothing to suggest that the paper's Jewish readership objected to this opinion.

1696 Sanhedrin 52a in *The Babylonian Talmud,* pt. 4, *Nezikin*, vol. 3 (London: Soncino Press, 1935), 349-50. Compare with the 1904 Mississippi lynching of Luther Holbert and his wife, in Synnestvedt, *The White Response to Black Emancipation*, 61-62. See also the descriptions of the torture of Henry Smith, in "Another Negro Burned," *NYT,* 2 Feb. 1893, 1, and of Richard Coleman, in "Negro Burned at a Stake," *NYT,* 7 Dec. 1899, 1.

1697 Melvin I. Urofsky, *A Voice That Spoke for Justice* (Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1982), 100.

1698 Elovitz, *Century of Jewish Life in Dixie*, 85-86; Lipson-Walker, "'Shalom Y'all'," 75.

1699 Stone, "Edgar Goldberg and the *Texas Jewish Herald*," 71-72; Stone, "West of Center," 191.

The New York Times **& Black Lynching**

Lynchings…were executed with a bestiality unknown even in the most remote and uncivilized parts of the world.

—

NAACP President Walter White, *Rope and Faggot*

Sixty-five years after slavery, the Jewish management of the *New York Times* deigned to elevate Blacks to a level of esteem it had long afforded to others. Up until March 7, 1930, the *Times* refused to capitalize the word *Negro*, but from that day forward, the paper pompously reported, it would be giving "tribute to millions who have risen from a low estate into 'the brotherhood of the races.'"

> It is not merely a typographical change; it is an act in recognition of racial self-respect for those who have been for generations in "the lower case."[1700]

Despite its insufferable pretentiousness, the

Times was in fact admitting that Blacks had been treated as less than citizens by its Jewish owners in all the previous years. By contrast, most of the leading *Southern* newspapers had capitalized "Negro" long before the Northern *Times*, as had *the grand wizard and founder of the Ku Klux Klan*, William J. Simmons, who was capitalizing *Negro* in his published writings a decade earlier.

The *New York Times* was in print for forty-five years before it was acquired by the Tennessee-born Jew Adolph Ochs on August 13, 1896, for $75,000. With a sizable Jewish staff and readership,[1701] it has been deemed the American "newspaper of record," meaning that it is presumed to set the standard of journalism for the nation and that its articles establish a definitive record of current events for use by future scholars and historians. Since Ochs's acquisition of the *Times*, the paper's editorial slant and basic reportage had been consistently white supremacist and thoroughly hostile to Blacks.[1702]

Dr. Steven Bloom wrote that the *Times* "showed disdain for the efforts of American Negroes to better themselves." Adolph Ochs, wrote Bloom, "possessed many Southern prejudices against the Negro which were often evident in *Times* editorials."[1703] The general racist thrust of Ochs's *New York Times* is best exemplified in the edition he published on June 9, 1901. Five separate articles contain ideas, beliefs, and attitudes indistinguishable from those of the Ku Klux Klan, and one even approvingly explains the Tennessee origins of the group. Another article advocated the beating of Blacks in order to "drive the men to work," after which "the negro goes resignedly and sadly, like a cow, while an occasional whack urges him on." The writer further tells us that

> Northerners cannot realize how low in intelligence, how irresponsible the pure negro is. He is an animal...even worse than most animals…[1704]

In the same issue the *Times* decried the attitude of Blacks who did not appreciate the "opportunities" in cotton picking:

> Unfortunately, the negro is degenerating….Were he differently constituted…he would be infinitely more dangerous than he now has the energy to be.

The *Times* decried "the college-bred negro" and attacked Du Bois's Talented Tenth concept, insisting that all Blacks would be better off working with their hands, not their minds. The front page of that issue expressed the drawbacks of allowing Alabama Blacks to vote, and worried that the Black voters were a "menace to the well-being and prosperity of the State." In 1908, just a year before the founding of the NAACP, Ochs had a promising employment opportunity for Black women:

> There is no reason why the South should be deprived of its Old Mammies. There is plenty of raw material in all conscience. A bandanna handkerchief, a calico frock, an apron, a suggestion of embonpoint, and a course of lessons in Southern cookery, which is now understood only in the North, will transform any intelligent colored woman into an Old Mammy. Northern capital could not be better employed, and the firmer establishment of friendly relations with

> the South would be secured by the operation. Why not have Old Mammy training schools at once?[1705]

These expressions of Ochs's white supremacy were bordered by prominent advertisements by firms with Jewish surnames like Simonson, Haas, Koch, Altman, Siegel, Arnheim, Stern, Fischer, Weber, Sidenberg, Wissner, Abraham & Straus, Krause, Millekin, and Miller. Later, the well-known Jewish retailer Saks & Company was advertising "new fall skirts for women" in Ochs's paper. It assured potential customers that if they didn't want blue stripes, black, or navy, they also had skirts in "nigger brown."[1706] The *Times* rang in the 1913 Christmas season with a ditty describing a "mammy's" wish "Fur er nigger Santy Claus" to take pity on her "pickaninnie."[1707] The terms "nigger," "coon," and "darkey"[1708] were used interchangeably with "negro" and "colored."

In 1903 the *Times* scolded those it called the "weaker race":

> There are in New York thousands of utterly worthless negro desperadoes, gamblers when they have money and thieves when they have none, moral lepers and more dangerous than wild animals…who easily and almost naturally develop into burglars, highwaymen, and murderers.[1709]

In that same year the *Times* asserted that a certain "negro judge" of South Carolina "was a typical African, and his grotesque appearance was not unlike that of an ordinary ape" and that the attorneys in his court addressed him as "Sambo."[1710]

When it chose to cover the epidemic of Black lynchings, the Jewish-owned newspaper was coldly matter-of-fact, showing little trace of indignation or even displeasure at the countrywide carnage. The white lynchers were not savage criminals but inventive dispensers of justice driven to the act by "black depravity"; and the Black victims were most often presumed guilty. Though there was no trial, indictment, or even a legitimate arrest, a 1900 *Times* headline declared that a NEGRO MURDERS A CITIZEN and almost gleefully forecasted his fate in the subtitle: "POSSES ARE LOOKING FOR HIM, AND HE WILL BE LYNCHED."[1711] Another *Times* article "objectively" reported a burning at the stake in Alabama, opining that the "negro" victim "certainly has been punished for his crime." The "reporter" added judiciously that "his identity was thoroughly established by his victim."[1712]

Ludicrous charges against Black victims went unquestioned in the *Times* reports. The lynching of one Black man was justified by the claim—fully accepted by the *Times* reporter—that "the negro" had struck a white woman on the head and then "roasted" her baby over an open fire.[1713] The headline of one article was SCORE OF NEGROES KILLED BY WHITES, subtitled "Trouble Started Over Non-Payment of a Negro's Note…" The first sentence: "As the result of a race war…eighteen negroes are known to be dead…" The Jewish-owned newspaper felt this alleged "non-payment" would adequately explain one of the most depraved racial massacres in American history. It added, "[A] negro grew insulting and trouble followed." Though not a single white person was reported hurt in this "race war," the *Times* reported that "The white people of the little community…were uneasy over the situation." Thus, the flimsiest of pretexts justifies the bloodbath, yet the whites are presumed

defenseless and justly fearful.[1714]

Similarly, when a Black political leader was beaten to death and then shot, the *Times* headline was NEGRO UPRISING FEARED, showing concern for the safety of whites and none over the barbaric lynching of the Black man.[1715] Yet another *Times*-declared "Race War" was reported in Louisiana in 1900 and the reporter again unquestioningly blames "a negro" for "the fiendish murder of a young white man."[1716] Another article suggests that the lynchers were an officially sanctioned deliberative body: The "opinion" of the mob "was divided" as to his guilt or innocence; a "mass meeting held later" condemned the lynching.[1717] When the *Times* ran a headline such as NEGRO KILLED BY WHITES, the paper was reporting it not as an actual crime, but as a curiosity. It takes only a sentence or two before the victim's "crime" is made known—being in or near a "gambling house" in this case. Further, a racial "clash" was expected but never materialized because "the negroes failed to assume a belligerent attitude, and quiet was restored."[1718] In another article with the headline NEGRO KILLED BY POSSE was the all-too-familiar excuse that a Black man was murdered "as he turned to flee."[1719] For the *Times*, all Blacks were criminals, even when the Blacks were policemen. A 1909 headline read: WESTON ARRESTED BY NEGRO OFFICER; the article went on to ridicule the policeman, who, upon learning of Edward Weston's apparent celebrity, "walked away without offering an apology..."[1720]

In another, the *Times* simply accepted the word of a 14-year-old girl that she and "a farmer's wife" were "attacked," rather than that of a duly constituted jury as called for by the United States Constitution. It reported that "About 300 shots were

fired into the negro's body," before the corpse was dragged through town and displayed "in the colored settlement."[1721] The *Times* did not question that another lynch mob relied solely and totally on the word of a five year old.[1722] A 1909 Florida lynching was mentioned in the *Times* in a one-column-inch description, the last two sentences of which were "Twenty shots were fired into his body. The negro confessed."[1723] When reporters showed any outrage at all, it was over the supposed crimes of the Black lynching victims—terms such as "alleged" or "accused" were reserved for whites only.[1724]

In a 1903 editorial, Ochs clearly included himself among the leaders of the "superior race," with "the responsibility of devising a solution for all the race questions that come up"—a position that actually foreshadowed Nazism.[1725]

Prior to Jewish ownership, the *Times*, though firmly representing white interests in its coverage of anti-Black violence, at least exhibited a concern over the wholesale trampling of due process in these common American horrors. The pre-Ochs *Times* carried speeches and accounts condemning the lawlessness of the lynchers and its headlines would often scream of outrage, using the appropriate terms for the horrors like "massacre," "butchery," "slaughter," "atrocity," and "terror," and even referring to the perpetrators as "barbarians," "savages," and "fiends."[1726] After its purchase by Adolph Ochs, the paper shifted its coverage, under the guise of "objectivity," to simply regurgitating the white Southern perspective.

In 1902 and 1905, the *Times* reviewed Thomas Dixon's violent race-baiting novels *The Leopard's Spots* and *The Clansman*. It used the opportunity to denounce Black voting rights and to join Dixon in honoring the Ku Klux Klan.[1727] When the Dyer Anti-

Lynching Bill of 1922 came to their attention, a bill American Blacks so passionately advocated, the editors printed a letter from a reader that one must presume gave a good account of Ochs's sentiments on the matter:

> All the negro votes and Dyer bills from now till doomsday cannot prevent men avenging crimes against their mothers, wives and sisters. The negro is not blessed with the inhibitions of the passions that white men have gained by centuries of self-control.[1728]

1700 "'NEGRO' WITH A CAPITAL 'N,'" *NYT*, 7 March 1930, 20. National magazines had long ago made the change. See "CAPITAL 'N' NEGRO WIDENS," *NYT*, 9 March 1930, 21. See also "'Negro' With a Big 'N'," *New York Age*, 17 Aug. 1918, reprinted in *The Selected Writings of James Weldon Johnson,* vol. 1, *The New York Age Editorials, 1914–1923,* ed. Sondra K. Wilson (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), 36-38.

1701 Ochs obtained financing for the purchase from several prominent Jews, including the American agent for the Rothschild bank August Belmont, the head of Kuhn, Loeb investment bank Jacob Schiff, and Macy's owner Isidor Straus, all of whom wanted Ochs to succeed because they thought he "could be of great service to the Jews generally." Susan E. Tifft and Alex S. Jones, *The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind the New York Times* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1999), 37-38; Adolph S. Ochs, "Business Announcement," *NYT*, 19 Aug. 1896, 4. The Ochses owned a country store in Natchez, Mississippi. Son Adolph married Iphigene Wise, the daughter of Isaac Mayer Wise, the bigoted rabbi who fathered Reform Judaism in America.

1702 Tifft and Jones, *The Trust*, 277-78. Even into the 1950s, the *Times* was consciously managing the Black image for all the world to see. Photographs of Blacks were "carefully chosen" by the *Times* management to present a particular image. Black wedding photos were barred into the 1950s and only appeared later when the bride and groom were light-skinned. Even the obituaries were "racially segregated" (p. 275). Until 1950, the NAACP considered the *Times* to be "anti-Negro" (p. 277). When Black opera singer Roland Hayes was invited to the *Times* by Arthur Ochs Sulzberger in the 1920s, Julius Ochs Adler was so upset that he left the building. According to Iphigene Ochs Sulzberger, "Julius had this southern approach: *we love the Negroes, we must look after them but keep them in their place; they are fine as long as they stay in the kitchen.*" (Emphasis ours, p. 816)

1703 Steven Bloom, "Interactions Between Blacks and Jews in New York City, 1900-1930, As Reflected in the Black Press" (Ph.D. diss., New York Univ., 1973), 29-30. See *NYT*, 29 April 1909.

1704 See also the article "The Black Man North and South," *NYT,* 8 Feb. 1903, SM12.

1705 "The 'Old Mammy' Market," *NYT*, 9 Jan. 1908, 8.

1706 *NYT,* 23 Aug. 1914, 11. In the same issue Saks & Co. also advertised tunics "In navy, black, green and nigger brown."

1707 "The Pickaninnies' Christmas," *NYT*, 6 Dec. 1913, 10.

1708 See *NYT,* 6 Dec. 1913, 1; 26 Dec. 1913, 11; 31 May 1905, 8; 20 Feb. 1906, 8.

1709 "The Negro and the Law," editorial, *NYT,* 14 July 1903, 6.

1710 "Negro Legislators," *NYT,* 8 Feb. 1903, 34.

1711 *NYT,* 9 June 1900, 7. The paper similarly forecasted that "the negro probably will be hanging to a tree before morning," in "A Lynching Expected," *NYT,* 6 Nov. 1897, 3.

1712 "Alabama Justice," *NYT,* 23 July 1897, 10.

1713 "Negro Lynched in Alabama," *NYT,* 17 July 1897, 7.

1714 *NYT*, 31 July 1910, 1. Another example of the *Times*'s propensity to declare race wars is in "Race War Threatened," *NYT,* 25 June 1897, 1.

1715 *NYT*, 25 Oct. 1904, 1.

1716 "Race War in Louisiana," *NYT,* 11 June 1900, 1. The *Times* (31 Dec. 1898, 6), by giving white supremacists a forum to express their opinions, appeared to support their position on the 1898 Wilmington, North Carolina, massacre of Blacks.

1717 "Lynched Negro, Condemned Deed," *NYT*, 27 Sept. 1913, 8. The incident merited one column inch in the *Times*'s opinion.

1718 *NYT*, 13 Feb. 1911, 2.

1719 *NYT*, 4 Nov. 1909, 16.

1720 *NYT*, 29 April 1909, 10.

1721 "Drag Body Through Town," *NYT*, 1 Dec. 1907, 8. Historically, the public displaying of Black bodies was important to maintaining a sense of terror among the enslaved Black population in America. At the very inception of United States history, famed midnight rider Paul Revere said that he rode past the decayed body of a Black African who had been "hung in chains" in a tree, where it remained for *twenty years*, shriveling into a mummified remnant. See Esther Forbes, *Paul Revere* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 37-39, 258.

1722 "Negro Murderer Lynched," *NYT*, 11 Dec. 1897, 4.

1723 "Negro Lynched in Florida," *NYT*, 29 April 1909, 6.

1724 David T. Z. Mindich, *Just the Facts: How "Objectivity" Came to Define American Journalism* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1998), 118-23.

1725 "Lynching and the Race Problem," *NYT*, 13 Aug. 1903, 8.

1726 An example of the pre-Ochs position is in "Lynching in the South," *NYT*, 14 Jan. 1896, 4.

1727 "Mr. Dixon's *The Leopard's Spots*," *NYT*, 5 April 1902, BR10; "Ku Klux Klan," *NYT*, 21 Jan. 1905, BR34. See also "Mr. Dixon's Latest Ku Klux Novel," *NYT*, 3 Aug. 1907, BR475; "Atlanta Views on

Riots," *NYT,* 24 Sept. 1906, 2. Dixon expounded freely on how the "liberties" of northern Blacks were the cause of Southern white violence and lynchings; the *Times* openly and approvingly quoted—a generation before Hitler—Dixon's views on the supremacy of the "Aryan race."

1728 John S. Terry, "Lynchings in the South," letter to the editor, *NYT*, 16 July 1922.

Black "Rape" and White Slavery

The charge of "rape"—the most frequently advanced "justification" for the lynchings of Black men and boys—was simply the unconscious projection of the white man's known behavior patterns onto the Black man. The forcible invasion of Black womanhood has been a central feature of the history of European colonization. Whole races were systematically altered and created, often while simultaneously vilifying the Black male population as sexual deviants. And in twentieth-century Europe, Nazi propaganda slandered Jewish males as sexual deviants when it served the Nazis' greater need for dominance and control. Israel Gutman explains in the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* the direct parallels between the Black and Jewish experiences:

> Accusations of uncontrolled sexuality were *especially important* here. The fear of miscegenation—of whites interbreeding with blacks—led to lynchings of blacks suspected of having raped white women, just as the racists in Europe were to accuse the Jews of raping "Aryan" women.[1729]

In America, the Black man was vilified in this same manner by whites *and* Jews, even as mixed-race populations of Blacks, called "mulattoes," or "creoles," or "quadroons," or "octoroons," were being bred through the unrestrained white male rape of enslaved Black women.

Adolph Ochs proved an excellent model for Adolf Hitler's propaganda campaigns of a generation later when he editorialized that it was

"very true and worth considering" that the lynching of Blacks for "rape" protected the alleged white female "victim" from the "additional ordeal of pain and humiliation" of having to testify in an actual courtroom. The *Times* advocated that the penalties for what it called "the usual crime" be raised to a capital offense, thus allowing the state, rather than the mob, to carry out a more orderly lynching.[1730]

According to the anti-lynching crusader Ida B. Wells-Barnett, rape committed by white men against Black women and girls was

> never punished by mob or the law....Yet colored women have always had far more reason to complain of white men in this respect than ever white women have had of Negroes.[1731]

Black men cited this widespread sexual terrorism by white men as one of their prime motivations for fleeing the South in the Great Migration northward starting in the early 1900s.[1732] In a chapter he titled "The Damnation of Women," W.E.B. Du Bois said of the white South that

> one thing I shall never forgive, neither in this world nor the world to come: its wanton and continued and persistent insulting of the black womanhood which it sought and seeks to prostitute to its lust.[1733]

Furthermore, investigations showed that less than *one-fifth* of those Blacks who were lynched were even *charged* with rape, and even in those cases many were shown to be without foundation. Many times the charge was applied only after the lynching became publicized. Wells-Barnett showed

lynching to be a tool for terrorizing Blacks, repressing Black progress, and reestablishing white supremacy. Evidence shows that whites cried "rape" in areas where Blacks had gained a measure of political power through voting, but they found no "rape" where the Black vote had been thoroughly suppressed.[1734] Recent scholarship has correlated the periodic increases in lynchings with the fluctuating price of cotton and other economic factors that distressed marginal white male farmers.[1735]

Black scholar E. Franklin Frazier cut through the Caucasian pretense and zeroed in on the truth of the matter: "The closer a Negro got to the ballot box, the more he looked like a rapist."[1736] A number of terms denoting progressiveness can easily be substituted for "ballot box," including economic independence, political authority, books, education, Black unity—all of which inspired white men to racial violence.[1737] Prominent Jews like Kentucky businessman Mat Cohen took out a paid advertisement in which he decried the conditions in Louisville that were "due to Republican coddling of the worthless negroes, which had resulted in the unpunished attack on a dozen white women by negro brutes."[1738]

At the same time that the rates of Black lynchings were at their highest and the cry of "rape" was at its loudest, Jews themselves were heavily engaged in the international "white slavery" trade, where in many urban centers around the world Jewish pimps made commerce of Jewish *and* Gentile women in that seedy and brutal rape-for-profit business. According to Jewish scholar Robert Rockaway,

> Starting in the 1870s, Jews played an

> increasingly conspicuous role in commercial prostitution. By the twentieth century, Yiddish-speaking Jews *dominated* the international white slavery traffic, especially in Jewish women, out of Eastern Europe…[1739]

So alarming was the *Jewishness* of this organized vice network that B'nai B'rith leaders admitted in their internal publications that "no one ever dreamed that the [White Slave Traffic] would grow to such proportions…"[1740] As a business operation, "white slavery" was run in much the same way as the debt-lien system in the South. Young Jewish immigrant women were expected to work off their transportation fares by prostituting themselves. As it was with the sharecroppers, the debt was fashioned in such a way that it was never retired; hence the wide application of the term "white slavery."[1741] No Black men were ever implicated in this iniquitous network of sex criminals and no Jewish men were ever lynched as a result of their organized and widespread commercial violation of white womanhood.[1742]

The *New York Times* under the Southern Jew Adolph Ochs became the most potent media vehicle by which the "Black rape" canard was spread throughout the world. The unmatched authority and reputed prestige of the *Times* made its every word believable and unchallengeable. The effect it had in shaping the national policy (or at least the national attitude) on lynching, and therefore in shielding the lynchers from due retribution, is yet untold. The "Black rape" charge had so saturated the public's understanding of the lynching issue that a "race man" like Frederick Douglass (before seeing the Wells investigations) bitterly lamented "lasciviousness on the part of Negroes."[1743] So

flagrant was the *Times*'s racism that one of the white Gentile founders of the NAACP, Oswald Garrison Villard, was moved to include in his autobiography a general statement of indignation concerning *Jewish* racism:

> [I]t is a fact that some of the most rabid anti-Negro Southerners that I have met during my life have been Jews.[1744]

In a 1901 article in the *Times* titled DISCOURAGING LYNCH LAW IN ALABAMA, the paper decided that "Lynchings have become much too easy," as if to suggest that making them *a little harder* would be satisfactory. And it conceded that "a great many innocent negroes have been destroyed by mobs under a misapprehension." While the article acknowledged that "torture" "gratifies a certain brutal instinct" and that the lynchers are actually "craving" Black blood, the *Times* called for only weak "reforms" and cared not to bring the lynchers to justice.[1745] By contrast, a white-run newspaper in the Deep South, the *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, denounced the violence in the clearest terms:

> The riders by night have exceeded the patience of the people, and they must be hunted down and exterminated.[1746]

In 1924, the *Times* was probably seeking to justify its own role in frustrating anti-lynching legislation when it announced in a headline: ONLY TWENTY-EIGHT PERSONS KILLED BY MOB VIOLENCE IN ONLY NINE STATES: 26 OF VICTIMS NEGROES. The Jewish-owned newspaper clearly saw this as progress.[1747]

1729 Emphasis ours. "Racism," *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust,* ed. Israel Gutman (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 1212.

1730 "Lynching and the Race Problem," *NYT*, 13 Aug. 1903, 8; "Lynching, North and South," *NYT,* 5 June 1897, 6. The *Times*'s Gentile editors advocated this "solution" prior to Ochs's arrival. See "British Anti-Lynchers," *NYT*, 2 Aug. 1894, 4; and Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 122.

1731 Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *On Lynchings: Southern Horrors, A Red Record, Mob Rule in New Orleans* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 67; Wells-Barnett, "Lynch Law in America," 15-24; "Document: Ida B. Wells-Barnett: Lynching and the Excuse for It," *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, http://www.britannica.com; Nate Shaw and Theodore Rosengarten, *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw* (New York: Knopf, 1974), 381. Wells-Barnett uncovered a large number of consensual relationships between Black men and white women which when discovered were called "rape." For a white woman's view see "Women of South Are Tired of 'Chivalry' As Excuse for Lynching, Says Mrs. Ames," *AC,* 17 Jan. 1937, 13(A).

1732 Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 157; Angela Davis, "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves," *Black Scholar* 3, no. 4 (Dec. 1971): 12-14; Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1976), 437-39. See Lisa Cardyn, "Sexualized Racism/Gendered Violence: Trauma and the Body Politic in the Reconstruction South" (Ph.D. diss., Yale Univ., 2003).

1733 W.E.B. Du Bois, *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (1920; reprint, Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1999), 100. Du Bois further editorialized in the NAACP's *Crisis,* March 1912: "Let black men especially kill lecherous white invaders of their homes and then take their lynching gladly like men. It's worth it!" New York City attorney Alfred C. Cowan wanted Blacks to violate no laws, but if attacked to kill as many of their assailants as possible. See "Talk of War on Whites at Negro Conference," *NYT*, 10 Oct. 1906, 16.

1734 Webb, "Lynching of Sicilian Immigrants," 50-51. Webb cites Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the Nineteenth-Century South* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1997) and Ida B. Wells, *A Red Record* (1895). See also *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*, ed. Alfreda M. Duster (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1970), 64, 65-66; Mindich, *Just the Facts*, 120; "Topics of the Times," *NYT*, 12 Aug. 1899, 6; and Moncure D. Conway, "Lynching in Georgia," letter to the editor, *NYT*, 17 Sept. 1897, 6.

1735 E. M. Beck and Stewart E. Tolnay, "The Killing Fields of the Deep South: The Market for Cotton and the Lynching of Blacks, 1882-1930," *American Sociological Review* 55, no. 4 (Aug. 1990): 526-39. The NAACP's Walter White said, "Lynching has always been a means for protection not of white women, but of profits." Donald L. Grant, *The Way It Was in the South: The Black Experience in Georgia* (New York: Birch Lane, 1993), 161. Lynchings occurred for political and economic reasons. See Susan Olzak, "The Political Context of

Competition: Lynching and Urban Racial Violence, 1882-1914," *Social Forces* 69, no. 2 (Dec. 1990): 395-421.

1736 Jules Chametzky and Sidney Kaplan, *Black and White in American Culture* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1969), 339.

1737 See Terence Finnegan, "Lynching and Political Power in Mississippi and South Carolina," in *Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South,* ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1997), 190.

1738 "A Hornet's Nest: Judge Bingham's Stand on Bringing Race Issue into Politics," *Lexington Herald*, 24 Nov. 1920, 4.

1739 Emphasis ours. Robert Rockaway, review of *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939,* by Edward J. Bristow, in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 2, ed. Peter Y. Medding (Bloomington, IN: Indiana Univ. Press, 1986), 310; Stone, "Edgar Goldberg and the *Texas Jewish Herald*," 87-92, 95-97, 106 n. 57, 107 n. 68 and 69. Also, see the discussion of how the crime of rape is treated by the ancient Talmudic rabbis, in Judith Romney Wegner, *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1988), 22-28. Of 126 "disreputable houses" investigated in New York, Jews constituted the "largest number of proprietors." See Jean Ulitz Mensch, "Social Pathology in Urban America: Desertion, Prostitution, Gambling, Drugs and Crime among Eastern European Jews in New York City between 1881 and World War I" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia Univ., 1983), 77. Also, Isabel Vincent, *Bodies and Souls: The Tragic Plight of Three Jewish Women Forced into Prostitution in the Americas* (New York: William Morrow, 2005); Jeff Lesser, *Welcoming the Undesirables: Brazil and the Jewish Question* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1995).

1740 Mendel Silber, *B'nai B'rith in the Southland: Seventy Years of Service* (District Grand Lodge No. 7, 1943), 53-57, quote on 53. Also, Nora Glickman, "The Jewish White Slave Trade in Latin American Writings," *AJA* 34, no. 2 (Nov. 1982): 178-89.

1741 See Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982; reprint, New York: Schocken Books, 1983).

1742 Some of the Klan's anti-Jewish "complaints" included criticism of alleged "sexual offenses" committed by Jewish men. See MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry*, 144-47.

1743 See Duster, *Crusade for Justice*, 72.

1744 Oswald Garrison Villard, *Fighting Years: Memoirs of a Liberal Editor* (New York, 1939), 197.

1745 "Discouraging Lynch Law in Alabama," *NYT*, 11 July 1901, 6. Also, see the *Times*'s mild rebuke in "Lynching and Civilization," *NYT*, 24 Jan. 1898, 6; "Topics of the Times," 12 Aug. 1899, 6; and in "That 'White Man's Court,'" *NYT,* 29 July 1897, 6. See also Roach, "Bullies' Brains Light Up With Pleasure as People Squirm."

1746 "Demands Extermination: Memphis Commercial Appeal Says Night Riders Must Be Hanged," *NYT,* 21 Oct. 1908, 2.

1747 *NYT*, 16 March 1924, E1.

Russian Pogroms vs. American Lynching

At the end of the 19th century, American Jews began to champion the cause of Russian Jews who had come under the repressive dictates of Czar Alexander III, and the *New York Times* was outspoken in its coverage of the issue.[1748] Blacks immediately saw the parallels in the plight of the Russian Jews and offered Jews sympathy and support. In fact, Blacks became, according to one Jewish scholar, "among the most vociferous critics of tsarist antisemitism."[1749] In return, many Jews rejected the comparisons and used their various forums to distance themselves from any similarity between the violence against Russian Jews and the lynchings of American Blacks.

When Booker T. Washington expressed those similarities, the New Orleans-based *Jewish Ledger* published an editorial titled AN IMPUDENT NIGGER, in which it favorably quoted the notorious Christian Klan-lover Thomas Dixon. The paper's Jewish editors added to Dixon's invective their own anti-Black bile:

> To compare the Jew, who occupies the highest pinnacle of human superiority and intellectual attainment, with the Negro who forms the mud at its base, is something which only a Negro with more than the usual vanity and impudence of his race could attempt.[1750]

Philadelphia B'nai B'rith leader Dr. Solomon Solis-Cohen, angry at the comparison, charged that it was simply ridiculous

> to contrast the advanced stage of

> intellectual and moral development of the Jews in general with the limited progress that the masses of Negroes in America have made.

He blamed Blacks in America for their own lynchings, whilst the Jewish victims of Russian "pogroms" were clearly "innocent."[1751]

John D. Nussbaum thought it "preposterous" to compare, as a previous writer had done, the violence against Russian Jews to that perpetrated against American Blacks. In his denunciation of the idea, published in the *New York Times* in 1903—a year in which there were more than a hundred lynchings in America[1752]— Nussbaum explained the difference:

> Here a negro is lynched because he has—as the case always proved to have been—outraged a woman. The American sense of justice is so keen that it gets impatient at the tardiness of the law, and oftentimes takes the law into its own hands. It is no ignorant mob that incites the lynchings, but *an orderly American aggregation* with a high sense of honor and a reverence for the sanctity of the home. But what is the crime for which Jewish blood flows in streams in holy and orthodox Russia? Whoever heard of a Jew outraging a woman?[1753]

R. J. Lasker wrote to the *Times* to address the "beastly crimes at Kishineff" in 1903 but justified "negro" lynching:

> In this country if a negro is lynched, disgraceful as it is for the rest of us, he is

> punished for a crime against a little girl or a defenseless woman. The culprit is found to be in most cases one of the lowest creatures, who is dangerous to be let at large. No innocent person suffers for the crime, and his house or church is not molested or set on fire. At Kishineff the Russians fell upon a whole race like a wild tiger on a harmless lamb without any reason or excuse.[1754]

Black newspapers were incensed at the barrage of racist press coming from their Jewish "allies" at the *Times*. The *New York Age* targeted their hypocrisy in 1912: "Jews, through their instrument the *New York Times*, influenced foreign policy, but hurt Negroes in America."[1755] Their policy "cried aloud with patriotic fervor for better treatment of Jews in Russia, while sowing seeds of race prejudice against Negroes." The *Age* editorialized:

> And such names as Adolph S. Ochs and B.C. Frank which adorn the upper left hand corner of the editorial page, believe it their duty to preach race hatred in the United States and in the same breath demand that another nation treat a certain element of its citizens with a more broadminded spirit tempered with justice.[1756]

The *Age* illustrated its charges by citing "letters saturated with race antipathy, ignorance and incongruous statements," which, it said, "no other reputable New York newspaper but the *Times* would have published." Jewish scholar Steven Bloom concluded that "this Jewish-owned newspaper seemed to be concerned only with Jewish rights and

often at Negro expense."[1757] Chicago's Black-owned *Broad-Axe* newspaper denounced the racism of the *Times*:

> Of all the morally wretched defenders of this American crime of lynching, the American Jew who defends Negro lynchers while denouncing Russian massacres—and some do—is most contemptible.[1758]

The *Chicago Defender* asked why Presidents Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson complained about the mistreatment of alien Jews and ignored "the assassins of the South." The *Washington Bee* questioned those who ask Russia "to protect the Jews and at the same time murder the colored man." The *Atlanta Independent* wondered how Americans could "shed so many tears over...the oppressed ten thousand miles away" while they were silent about "the many outrages perpetrated against their black neighbors at home."[1759]

The *Times*'s championing of the cause of Russian Jews while ignoring or approving of Black lynching —what Bloom called "this American double standard"—represented pure Jewish hypocrisy to the Black press.[1760] The *St. Paul Appeal* announced that the "Jews are just as active in aiding [in] th[e] persecution [of blacks] as any other class of people." Most upsetting of all to the *Cleveland Gazette,* wrote Arnold Shankman,

> was that a Russian Jew but a few months removed from the massacres of his native country and who came to America to escape prejudice, hatred and death was a leader of the recent [1908] Springfield, Ill. mob. This hardly seems possible.[1761]

That immigrant Russian Jew—Abraham Reimer—had led a mob in the commission of at least seven murders and the destruction of 40 homes and 24 businesses. Reimer was released from jail by a sympathetic chief of police, but his arrest confirmed the extent to which Jews collaborated with American racial violence.[1762]

Moreover, Louis Marshall's private correspondence in 1906 demonstrated that Jews at the highest levels were fully aware of the hypocrisy of their position. As president of the highly respected Temple Emanu-El in New York City, Marshall wrote that the U.S. would "cut a sorry figure" should it "criticize the Russian treatment of the Jews and do nothing to prevent such domestic outrages against the Negroes."[1763] Publicly, however, the Jews of America self-righteously protested Russian "anti-Semitism" and pressed their own government to formally petition the Russians for an explanation. But in an act of poetic justice, the Russians smugly "rejected the petition and advised the U.S. government to end the persecution of minorities in its own land before criticizing another."[1764]

Unfortunately, the *Times* was not the only Jewish newspaper with a record of anti-Black racism. The Jewish-owned *San Francisco Chronicle* ran the following headline above a story of a lynching in Springfield, Kentucky: "A BRUTAL NEGRO IS TAKEN FROM JAIL AND HANGED BY A KENTUCKY MOB." It, according to one scholar, "typified the manner in which stories on lynching were presented." Evincing not a trace of indignation, the *Chronicle* reported on another lynching in Mobile, Alabama, where three Blacks were murdered: "It was first decided to burn the negroes at the stake, but this plan was abandoned."

Not only did the reporter appear to condone this foul act, but he seems to have witnessed the planning. Other anti-Black *Chronicle* articles "were written in dialect" and mockingly accompanied by cartoons.[1765]

The fact is Jews, along with their fellow whites, became Ku Klux Klan members, donning the white hoods and robes and engaging in terrorist activities side by side with white Gentiles. Not only were Jews open supporters of the Klan, but some of their greatest Gentile defenders were Klan members and officials. Jews could be found selling saddles, sheets, hoods, and guns to the cross-burners, their rabbis associating openly with known Klan leaders and their newspapers justifying lynching by promoting the racist canard of "black rape." The Ku Klux Klan and Black lynching—two prominent American institutions—found many willing Jewish collaborators.

1748 Bloom, "Interactions Between Blacks and Jews in New York City," 29-30. In May of 1882, Alexander introduced the so-called Temporary Regulations known as the May Laws, which were qualitatively different from the Jim Crow laws in place in the United States. Jews faced quotas in secondary and higher education and many professions, while Blacks would have considered it a major civil rights victory to have those quotas in America. Other laws show Jews to have reached levels in Russian society that Blacks have yet to reach in America in 2015. In 1889, for instance, Jewish army doctors were not allowed to exceed 5% in Russia, while even today the overall percentage of Black doctors in the United States is 2.2–2.9 percent. (Blacks make up 13% of the total U.S. population.) In Czarist Russia, the number of Jewish lawyers was restricted. In the whole state of Georgia (where "negro testimony" was not allowed), there were fewer than ten Black lawyers practicing in 1913, down from twice that number just a few years before. Today Blacks are only 3.9 percent of lawyers in the United States. Charles S. Bernheimer, *The Russian Jew in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1905), 21:

> The percentage of Jews, Germans, Poles, and other non-Russians among the artists, scholars, merchants, and manufacturers, and even among the government employees of Russia, is so large, in spite of all the favors shown to Russians, and all the disadvantages under

> which the non-Russians have to labor, as almost to justify [Konstantin Petrovich] Pobiedonostseff's statement that the Jews must be discriminated against because the Russians are not able to compete with them on equal terms.

Ibid., 27: "The intellectual condition of the Jews of Russia is, on the average, much higher than that of the Russians." Whereas Jews did face discrimination in Russia, Blacks would have found the Jewish condition to be a vast improvement over their own. See also Fyodor Dostoyevsky's description of the Jewish condition in Russia in his book *The Diary of a Writer*, trans. Boris Brasol (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1949), 637-51.

1749 Arnold Shankman, "Brothers Across the Sea: Afro-Americans on the Persecution of Russian Jews, 1881-1917," *Jewish Social Studies* 37, no. 2 (spring 1975): 121. Also, the Black press openly decried as a matter of principle the mild-by-comparison anti-Jewish discriminations in America, such as hotels denying Jews admission and anti-Jewish college quotas, but the daily racial violence suffered by Blacks found few protesters in the Jewish press. See Arnold Shankman, "Friend or Foe? Southern Blacks View the Jew, 1880-1935," in *"Turn to the South": Essays on Southern Jewry*, eds. Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin I. Urofsky (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1979), 116-17.

1750 Malone, *Rabbi Max Heller*, 101; *Jewish Ledger*, 22 Sept. 1905; Goldstein, "'Now Is the Time,'" 134, 140-41; Eric L. Goldstein, "The Unstable Other: Locating the Jew in Progressive-Era American Racial Discourse," *AJH* 89, no. 4 (Dec. 2001): 403. In his *Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006), 56, Goldstein points out that these lines were added to Dixon's comments by the *Jewish Ledger*'s editors, though they attributed them to Dixon. See also "The Negro A Menace Says Thomas Dixon," *NYT,* 9 June 1903, 2. Ironically, New York rabbi Stephen S. Wise compared the plights of Russian Jews and Southern Blacks when he eulogized Booker T. Washington in 1915. See *NYT*, 13 Dec. 1915, 8.

1751 Foner, "Black-Jewish Relations," 363-64. "African American newspapers like the New York *Age*, Baltimore *Afro-American*, and *The Freeman* even reprinted such racist statements for their readers to review." Cohen's position was endorsed by Thomas Dixon. Black newspapers expressed their outrage that Jews would not repudiate Dixon's endorsement. See Yvonne DeCarlo Newsome, "A House Divided: Conflict and Cooperation in African American-Jewish Relations" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern Univ., 1991), 77-78; Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 55-57, 64-65.

1752 NAACP, *Thirty Years of Lynching* (1969), appendix.

1753 Emphasis ours. The Jewish-run "white slavery" business was covered previously in this chapter. John D. Nussbaum, "The Jews in Russia," letter to the editor, *NYT*, 15 Nov. 1903, 23. He further claims that Americans need not "be ashamed of lynching black or white fiends who commit the unspeakable crime of rape." See article by Terence Finnegan titled "Lynching and Political Power," in *Under*

Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South, ed. W. Fitzhugh Brundage (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1997), 190 and passim. See also Wells-Barnett, *On Lynchings*; Rockaway, review of *Prostitution and Prejudice,* 2, 310; and Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice*. For rape of Black women by Jewish men, see *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews,* 1:37-38, 196-201.

1754 R. J. Lasker, "Kishineff and Lynchings," letter to the editor, *NYT*, 24 May 1903, 27. Two days of rioting known as the Kishinev Pogrom occurred April 6–7, 1903, during which it is claimed that 47-49 Jews were killed, 592 wounded, and severe property damage occurred. See also "Governor Said To Have Ordered Kishineff Riots: Story Given Out That Hebrew Banker Refused To Give Him Loan," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 21 May 1903, 1.

1755 Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism," 34.

1756 Bloom, "Interactions Between Blacks and Jews in New York City," 31. B.C. Frank may possibly have been Ochs's cousin and partner, Ben Franck. Price, "Black Response to Anti-Semitism," 34.

1757 Bloom, "Interactions Between Blacks and Jews in New York City," 58.

1758 Foner, "Black-Jewish Relations," 364. An identical situation arose in the 1930s when Blacks asked why the U.S. government was not "equally indignant at the lynching, burning alive and torture with blow torches of American citizens by American mobs on American soil which have shamed America before the world for a much longer time than persecution under Adolf Hitler…" See "U.S. Offer to Aid Jews Draws Query on Lynching," *Crisis*, April 1938. Also, *Crisis*, Dec. 1938, 393; Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 168ff.

1759 Shankman, "Brothers Across the Sea," 118-19. Others were also incredulous at this extraordinary attention given to the plight of the Russian Jews. When the Asians on the west coast were under a Jewish-led attack against their citizenship rights, one observer commented wryly:

> One thing I am certain of, namely, that if the Press of England, Germany, and other European countries were as largely in Chinese hands as it is in Jewish hands, we should have heard much more than we have heard about anti-Chinese action in America and much less about anti-Jewish action in Russia.

See Rudolf Glanz, "Jews and Chinese in America," *Jewish Social Studies* 16, no. 3 (July 1954): 230; also, Wells-Barnett, *On Lynchings*, 97; and White, *Rope and Faggot*, 34. Chicago's *Jewish Daily Courier* noted that American lynching was similar to the Russian pogroms. See Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*, 98-99.

1760 Bloom, "Interactions Between Blacks and Jews in New York City," 29.

1761 Shankman, "Brothers Across the Sea," 120.

1762 Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 84. See also Abraham Bisno, *Union Pioneer* (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1967), 47. The NAACP was formed in response to this very act of white mob

violence.

1763 Reznikoff, *Louis Marshall,* 422; Bloom, "Interactions Between Blacks and Jews in New York City," 28; Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 65-66.

1764 Newsome, "A House Divided," 77. In fact, the Russians would continue to rebuff U.S. criticism for the next several decades, citing the U.S. government's racist treatment of Blacks. It has now been revealed that much of the civil rights progress was more a reaction to this successful use of racial propaganda by the Soviets than a capitulation to internal "moral pressure." See Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2000); Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), esp. chap. 7. The lynching of two Blacks in Mississippi "provided material for Nazi comparison with democratic governments." See "Nazis Attack U.S. Through Movies," *AC,* 16 April 1937, 25.

1765 Jules Becker, *The Course of Exclusion, 1882-1924: San Francisco Newspaper Coverage of the Chinese and Japanese in the United States* (San Francisco: Mellen Research Univ. Press, 1991), 95-96, 112, 131.

Afterword

The information presented in *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews, Volume 2,* is the substance of a new understanding of the storied and contentious Black–Jewish relationship. It is a history entirely absent from the dialogue between the traditional representatives of the two peoples, but it is clearly significant to their relative positions in America and the world.

Jews proved to be deft operatives in every aspect of the African slave trade, from the highest levels of the European banking infrastructure to the international merchandising and distribution of slavery-produced products; they also ran slave auction blocks and slave pens in the most remote cotton and sugar regions. This highly profitable Jewish revenue stream drove Jewish communal wealth and development, and such profits were only enhanced after Lincoln's so-called emancipation, when the vulnerable ex-slaves suffered new methods of economic exploitation in the form of sharecropping and debt peonage.

After the end of legal slavery, the Black–Jewish relationship continued without change. Jews maintained their interest in the labor of the Black man and woman, evincing not a trace of moral concern over their extensive participation in the most brutal and exploitative slave system ever devised.

Jews are generally believed to have avoided the South at all costs—seemingly refusing to acquiesce

to a hostile racial climate that, they imply, was inhospitable to their Judaic ethos. Evidence shows the opposite to be true. Jews were welcome and accepted in the Deep South—in the very places where Blacks were most brutally repressed. They became powerful forces in Southern government and especially in business, helping to frame and enforce the Black codes and Jim Crow laws. Indeed, Jews actually considered the Jim Crow era in the South their "Golden Age." Jews were operating gigantic cotton-marketing operations in the very center of the Mississippi Delta, shipping massive amounts of cotton to global markets. They imbibed and contributed to the region's culture of white supremacy and even altered their centuries-old Judaic rituals and traditions, using the oppressed Black population as scapegoats to further their assimilationist aims. As the originators and keepers of the rabbinical Curse of Ham and other Talmudic guidance, they brought to the Bible Belt Biblical sanctification of Black oppression.

The American Labor Movement played a critical role in thwarting Black advancement into secure and meaningful employment. The unions openly targeted all the skilled jobs Blacks held and then forcibly removed them from those occupations, installing white European immigrants in their place. Jews provided critical leadership for this racist stratagem and thus further pushed Blacks off the pathway to a full and complete freedom. The central role played by Jews in politics, media, and the unions in removing Asians from American society remains one of the ugliest chapters in American history.

Jews helped initiate America's most notorious terrorist organization—the Ku Klux Klan. Leaders of the Jewish community were actual night-riding

members of the KKK and other groups with similar racial objectives. They supported and defended the Klan and believed in its goals and violent tactics. Jews defended Black lynching, some even resisting those who tried to stop it.

That the Black–Jewish narrative of alliance and commonality could have emerged from this history is only a testament to the extraordinary influence of skilled propagandists. But this is not the end of the story. As Blacks and Jews moved into the 20th century, one group had been cruelly thwarted from making any appreciable gains since the slavery era, while the other stormed into the new era with a rapidly growing population, extraordinary wealth, and unbridled opportunities.

Epilogue

On June 26, 2010, the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan declared before a sold-out audience in Atlanta, Georgia, that those who have maliciously and deceitfully bludgeoned their critics with the term "anti-Semite" not only have concealed from the world their violently racist history but have usurped and appropriated the identity of the Black man and woman—the real Children of Israel. On that day, The Minister released volume two of *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews* and the companion volume titled *Jews Selling Blacks: Slave Sale Advertising by American Jews*, and sent a letter to the Anti-Defamation League's president, Abraham Foxman, challenging him and the Jewish leadership he represents to atone for the historical misdeeds of the Jewish people. This letter, along with both books, was sent to hundreds of American and world figures from all walks of life, many of whom have been either victims of the "anti-Semite" canard or perpetrators of the slanderous defamation. Twenty-five days later, The Minister addressed a second letter to Black Leadership. The text of both letters follows:

Letter to Abraham Foxman, ADL, June 24, 2010

President Abraham Foxman

Anti-Defamation League

605 Third Avenue

New York, New York 10017

Dear Mr. Foxman,

Please accept these two books enclosed from our Historical Research Department.

The charge of anti-Semitism has been leveled against the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam for many years. For twenty-five of the thirty-three years of my rebuilding of the Nation of Islam, I and we, in the Nation of Islam have suffered under the charge of "anti-Semitism" because I have dared to be critical of what I and many others feel is Jewish behavior that has ill-affected Black people and others.

Our Nation of Islam Historical Research Team was motivated by these false charges to study the works of Jewish scholars, historians, and Rabbis, being very careful to omit any words written or spoken, no matter how truthful, by those who are considered "anti-Semitic."

We can now present to our people and the world a *true*, undeniable record of the relationship between Blacks and Jews from their own mouths and pens. These scholars, Rabbis and historians have given to us an undeniable record of Jewish anti-Black behavior, starting with the horror of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, plantation slavery, Jim Crow, sharecropping, the labor movement of the North and South, the unions and the misuse of our people that continues to this very moment.

As you have constantly labeled me and done everything within your power to hinder me and us from the civilizing work that Allah (God) has given to The Honorable Elijah Muhammad and myself to do, I ask you to find one act committed by me or those who follow me that has injured one Jewish person, stopped Jews from doing business, hindered their education, injured their families, sullied or desecrated their synagogues. You will not find one. So, except for our willingness to tell the truth and our unwillingness to apologize to you for telling the truth, on what basis do you charge me and us as being "anti-Semitic"?

Armed with this knowledge from the pens of Jewish scholars, Rabbis, and historians, we could now charge you with the most vehement anti-Black behavior in the annals of our history in America and the world. We could charge you with being the most deceitful so-called friend, while your history with us shows you have been our worst enemy.

I do not write this with vitriol, hatred, bitterness, or a spirit of vengeance, because One greater than you and me has permitted this for His own wise purposes.

However, what is done is done. We cannot change the past. You and I, your children and mine, your people and mine are living in the present. Your present reality is sitting on top of the world in power, with riches and influence, while the masses of my people here in America, in the Caribbean, Central and South America and elsewhere in the world are in the worst condition of any member of the human family.

I have pleaded with you over the years for a sensible, intelligent dialogue. You have rejected me, and some Rabbis have given me terms for friendship that any self-respecting person could

never accept. So with this truth in our hands and yours, and soon in the hands of tens of thousands, I again ask you for a dialogue.

You are in a position to help me in the civilizing work that The Honorable Elijah Muhammad was given to do by Allah (God), whose burden and Mission –Allah and He –has made me to share. With this historical research in your hands, you may either gather your forces for an all-out struggle against me, the Nation of Islam, and the truth that I and we speak and write, or as an intelligent and civilized people, we can sit down and carve out a way forward that can obliterate the stain of the past and render us, Jews and Blacks–before Allah (God) and the world–in a new, honorable, and mutually respectful relationship.

This is an offer asking you and the gentiles whom you influence to help me in the repair of my people from the damage that has been done by your ancestors to mine. This is a wonderful way of the present generation of Jews to escape the Judgment of Allah (God) by aiding in the repair of His people.

However, should you choose to make our struggle to civilize our people more difficult, then I respectfully warn you, in the Name of Allah (God) and His Messiah, The Honorable Elijah Muhammad, that the more you fight and oppose me rather than help me to lift my people from their degraded state, Allah (God) and His Messiah will bring you and your people to disgrace and ruin and destroy your power and influence here and throughout the world.

I pray that you will make the wise and best choice.

Respectfully and Sincerely Submitted,

The Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan, Servant to the Lost-Found Nation of Islam in the West

Cc: Chairman Alan Solow, American Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations
President William Hess, American Zionist Movement
President Bob Elman, American Jewish Committee
President Dennis W. Glick, B'nai B'rith International
President Richard S. Gordon, American Jewish Congress
President Rabbi Moshe Kletenik, Rabbinical Council of America
President Rabbi Ellen Weinburg Dreyfus, Central Conference of American Rabbis
Executive Director Jerry Silverman, Jewish Federation of North America
President Stephen J. Savitsky, Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America
Executive Director Martin Schwartz, Jewish Labor Committee
President Lee Rosenberg, American Israel Public Affairs Committee
President Wayne Firestone, Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life
National Executive Director Herb Rosenbleeth, Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America
President Morton Klein, Zionist Organization of America
Executive Director Jeremy Ben-Ami, J Street

Enclosures

An Open Letter to Black Leadership

July 19, 2010

To the Spiritual, Political, Educational, and Economic Leaders and to our Sports and Entertainment Giants:

May this open letter find you well and in good spirit as we search for a solution to the many problems that we face as a people.

Most of you have benefited in some way from a relationship that you have with members of the Jewish Community. Some of you have become very wealthy and are able to live in the best manner that you choose because of this friendship. However, have you ever noticed that no matter how rich and powerful some of us have become, we have never been shown how to network with the wealthy and learned of our people, pooling our resources that we may produce for our people that which would grow us from a begging position as little children to become masters of our own destiny?

The Jewish people have maximized their wealth by networking with their people and others in America and the World, thus they have become masters in banking, trade, commerce and have parlayed their wealth to become masters in every field of human endeavor. At the same time, we as their friends amass wealth for ourselves, our families and a few people who benefit from us but never have we done anything collectively to benefit the masses of our people.

It is not that we would not desire to do this; it is because we have not been shown how. Our distrust and disunity prohibits us from doing what the Jewish people have done.

These books that the Historical Research

Department of the Nation of Islam has published, "The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews: How Jews Gained Control of the Black American Economy Volume 2" and "Jews Selling Blacks" are being shared with our people to show us how we were completely undone and how others have benefited from what has happened and continues to happen to us. We cannot deal effectively with our so-called friends as men and women without this vital knowledge.

Whenever the Light of Truth has been shone on them, they reach for you to defend them against the Truth that uncovers the horror that has been done to us. They have always been successful pitting us against each other thus keeping them from facing the Truth of their real relationship with us. As they call upon you to denounce me as an anti-Semite and, because of the favor you believe you owe them for what they have done to help make life comfortable for you; I am asking you to **stand down**. I am asking you to read this research and then discuss it with your Jewish friends. Would you condemn me as an anti-Semite for exposing the research that shows them as being anti-Black? I am asking you to stand down and let them come out to me to defend their record and history of their relationship with us that we compiled from that which was written by their own scholars, historians, and Rabbis.

If you become an apologist for them in this hour, you will be seen by the masses of our people as a modern day Uncle Tom who believes you owe more to them than to the masses of our suffering people. If you attack me at their insistence you will be seen as an enemy of the rise of our people as well as an enemy of your own rise; for you can never be free to rise above the limitations placed on

you by them until you know the absolute Truth of your relationship with them. Being an apologist for them will be dangerous for you as the masses of our people are awakening and are increasingly angry at the reality of our condition. No matter how popular you may be and desirous you may be to defend your so-called friends, it is dangerous for any of us to defend those who are the architects of White supremacy and are the architects of the destruction of us as a people.

Most of you are afraid to face such a formidable and powerful enemy. So, I implore you to stand to the side and let them come out to defend themselves and argue against the Truth that I and we speak and write.

I will prove to you and them that Allah (God) is Present and He is with me. As David went out to Goliath and defeated him in the face of the fear of King Saul and the Children of Israel, likewise, I can assure you that I will be victorious over your and my enemies with the Help of Allah (God) and His Christ (Mahdi).

Thank you for reading these words.

I Am Your Brother and Servant,

Respectfully and Sincerely Submitted,

The Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan

Servant to the Lost-Found Nation of Islam in the West

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